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ABSTRACT

The attitudes, expectations, and reactions of students taking a new multimedia Irish language course offered in 1982 by Ireland's Radio Telefis Eireann were surveyed. The course "Anois is Aris," is intended for adults who have never spoken Irish and is suitable for beginners as well as those who have studied Irish at school. The 20-week course includes a television program broadcast, a complementary radio program, and a course book. Of the 171 participants who completed a precourse questionnaire, 167 completed at least one journal questionnaire, which provides information on use of the learning package and learning outcomes. Information is provided on participants' background (age, sex, geographic origin and nationality, occupation, family life, leisure-time pursuits, and general education experience). The participants' language in the home, previous experience of learning Irish, and experience of learning languages other than Irish were also documented, along with the participants' intentions and expectations with regard to the course and their future use of Irish. With regard to the learning experience, information is presented on the following: (1) rates at which respondents used the different elements in the "Anois is Aris" package, (2) rates of private study, (3) week-by-week contact with and use of Irish other than during the course, (4) what respondents most enjoyed about different course units and other reactions to the course, (5) individual learning targets that caused difficulties, and (6) feedback from course dropouts. Questionnaires are appended. (SW)

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Learning Irish with "Anois is Arís"

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Erratum

Page 1, line 1:

for "November 1982"
read "November 1981"

Learning Irish with

Anois is Arís

A report on the background, attitudes, expectations and learning experience of a volunteer group of course participants

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December 1982

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Introduction

0.1 Purpose and structure of Anois is Arís

In November 1982 Radio Telefís Éireann launched Anois is Arís as the first level of a new multi-media Irish language course intended for "those who have never been able to speak Irish and who have had little or no contact with it since leaving school" (Ó Baoill and Ó Tuathaill 1981a, p.1). According to a personal communication that the research team received from a member of RTÉ's staff involved in planning the package, adults between the ages of 25 and 45 were the chief target audience. Advertising for the course implied that it was suitable for complete beginners as well as for those who had taken Irish at school.

Anois is Arís was made up of twenty weekly units, each unit comprising three essential components:

- a television programme broadcast at peak viewing time and repeated within the week;
- a complementary radio programme also broadcast twice within the week;
- a course book in twenty lessons which was intended to reinforce "each weekly step of the broadcasts" (Ó Baoill and Ó Tuathaill 1981a, p.1) - a practice tape was issued in conjunction with the course book.

Although the three basic components of the course may have been simultaneously conceived, they were not simultaneously produced. The course book was completed first, then the television programmes, and finally the radio programmes. To a considerable extent the course book determined the shape and content of the television programmes, and the book and television programmes together determined the shape and content of the radio programmes. The course as a whole fell into three main sections (units 1-5, 7-11, and 13-17); each main section was followed by a revision unit (units 6, 12, and 18); and the course concluded with two global revision units (units 19 and 20). Starting on 11 November 1981, RTÉ broadcast the first six television and radio programmes before Christmas 1981 and the remainder between New Year and Easter 1982.

Besides the three basic elements of the course there was a fourth element consisting of classes promoted by Bord na Gaeilge in conjunction with Adult Education authorities throughout the country and informal support-groups that RTÉ encouraged learners

to establish among themselves. Brief initiation courses were arranged in advance for teachers responsible for these classes and support-groups in order to familiarize them with the theoretical and pedagogical principles underlying Anois is Arís.

The total recommended Anois is Arís package was therefore television, radio, course book and class and/or support-group. Obviously, different combinations of these four elements could and did occur not only between individuals taking the course but also for the same individual in different weeks. The learning sequence for each unit recommended by the authors of the course book was: course book - opening section; television programme; course book - main section; radio; review of course book (see Ó Baoill and Ó Tuathaill 1981a, p.2).

0.2 Theoretical and pedagogical bases of Anois is Arís

According to the authors of the course book Anois is Arís was based on the notional/functional approach to language learning/ teaching:

> "The main emphasis of this approach is placed primarily on communication skills as opposed to a traditional primary emphasis on grammar or vocabulary. This is not to downgrade the importance of the latter in any way but simply to shift the activity of the learner towards practical communication situations" (Ó Baoill and Ó Tuathaill 1981a, p.2).

A more complete explanation of what the authors mean by this approach - or "language learning strategy", as they rather misleadingly call it (ibid.) - is provided in their handbook for teachers of Anois is Arís (Ó Baoill and Ó Tuathaill 1981b). They explain that the course was based on a prior analysis of the communicative needs of the learner made along similar lines to those followed by researchers and course-writers working under the aegis of the Council of Europe during the past decade or so:

> "Having examined over a period the ways in which language is used in daily life, the experts are of the opinion that language courses must be based on:
>
> (i) the functions that one needs to perform through the use of the language - asking questions, seeking information, permission etc., refusing, expressing thanks, greeting, taking leave, talking about past or future time etc.;
>
> (ii) the notions and topics they want to discuss - ownership, non-existence, time, age, value etc. (any notion or function may be used with several

topics);

(iii) the situations that the learners are likely to use the language in - listening to radio/television (news programmes, music etc.), in the Gaeltacht, in oral examinations etc.;

(iv) the benefit they will get from the language - at work, travelling etc.

... The items of language to be taught in a functional/notional approach are chosen for their effectiveness in communication."

(Translated from Ó Baoill and Ó Tuathaill 1981b, pp.1f.)

There are signs here that the authors have not fully assimilated the descriptive repertoire they are seeking to apply. For instance, "asking questions" and "talking about past or future time" are very odd examples of communicative functions. The former refers to formal processes which give expression to a whole range of communicative functions, and the latter refers to two very basic areas of meaning which are grammaticalized as well as lexicalized, and which are therefore usually dealt with in general notional terms. Furthermore, notions and topics are not interchangeable, as section (ii) of the above quotation seems to imply. A speaker may express the notion of ownership (for example) through use of the possessive adjective; but this does not mean that ownership is necessarily the topic he is referring to. In the sentence "John has crashed his car", "his" expresses the notion of ownership, but the topic being referred to is a car crash. The authors' confusion over notional/functional terminology is also present in many of the learning targets that they set in the course book. This presented the research team with design problems that are described in 0.4.2 below.

0.3 Background and objectives of the research project

Some months before broadcasting was due to begin, informal approaches were made by Mr John McMahon, RTÉ Education Officer, to a member of the Department of Teacher Education, Trinity College, to discuss the feasibility of conducting an independent evaluation of the Anois is Arís package. After consultation with colleagues in the Centre for Language and Communication Studies the present team was set up, with two members from the Department of Teacher Education and two members from the Centre.

Obviously there could be no question at this stage of formative evaluation, since the course had been designed, the book was being printed, and work was well under way on television and radio production. What RTÉ sought was a summative evaluation not of a tightly controlled experimental nature but yielding

information of the following kinds:

(i) profile of participants in the project - social and educational background, etc.;

(ii) reactions to the Anois is Arís package as a whole and to its different elements, including rates of participation and rates at which the different elements were used;

(iii) participants' evaluation of their progress during the course.

It was suggested that the research model might in some respects resemble that reported in Devitt and Czak 1981, in which student-teachers of modern languages described their reactions to being taught Russian and evaluated the experience from a linguistic and pedagogical point of view. Devitt and Czak's project was intended to sensitize future language teachers to the problems of the language learner and to increase their critical awareness of different language teaching methods. The research team for the present project decided that Devitt and Czak's instrument of data elicitation, a journal-questionnaire in which their subjects reported on different aspects of their learning experience, could be adapted to elicit data on reactions to the Anois is Arís package and on participants' evaluation of their progress.

0.4 Subjects and methodology

Subjects for the project were recruited by means of advertisements on television and radio and in the RTÉ Guide. In all some two hundred people applied to participate in the project. The 171 volunteers who completed and returned the pre-course questionnaire were sent a free copy of the course book, an explanatory letter and the first six journal-questionnaires. 167 volunteers completed and returned at least one journal-questionnaire.

0.4.1 Pre-course questionnaire

The pre-course questionnaire (see Appendix A) was based to a large extent on a questionnaire used by researchers in the Centre for Language and Communication Studies to survey students' language learning experience, language attitudes, and language needs (Little, Silvius and Singleton forthcoming). The purpose of the pre-course questionnaire was to elicit data on volunteers' social and educational background, their "language history", their attitudes to Irish, and their expectations of the Anois is Arís package. The data from the pre-course questionnaire would then be correlated with data from the journal-questionnaires

concerning participants' progress and reactions.

0.4.2 The journal-questionnaires

The journal-questionnaires (see Appendix B) were booklets of five or six pages which remained constant in format from unit to unit except for the second (and where necessary third) page, which was specific to each unit. The purpose of the weekly journal-questionnaires, which participants were required to send in within ten days of completing the learning activities for each unit, was to provide three types of information:

(i) how participants used the Anois is Arís package;

(ii) how and what they considered they had learned;

(iii) how they reacted to the different components of the package each week.

The first page of each journal-questionnaire was devoted to the first of these categories of information. The questions elicited data, for the most part in easily codable form, on whether participants had watched the television programme, listened to the radio programme, used the course book, attended classes or taken part in any other course-related activity; on the amount and type of private study they had done; on the degree of their exposure to and use of Irish other than within the context of Anois is Arís; on the level of their enthusiasm for learning Irish and on any factors that may have affected their enthusiasm either positively or negatively.

The second (and on occasion third) page of the journal-questionnaires sought information on how and what participants considered they had learned. In principle a notional/functional language course sets its learning targets in terms of what the successful learner should be able to do in the target language. General behavioural objectives are established and these are then elaborated in terms of communicative functions, notions, topics and situations. Thus it should have been possible to elicit what participants in Anois is Arís considered they had learned by asking them to assess at the end of each unit how far they could (a) understand someone else performing the communicative functions that were the learning targets for that unit, and (b) themselves perform the communicative functions. However, the learning targets in the Anois is Arís course book presented a number of problems. First, the course contained no clear specification of general behavioural objectives, and collectively the learning targets amounted to a rather random repertoire. Secondly, the items listed in the course book were not always communicative functions in the sense that syllabus designers commonly attach to the expression; for example, "How to ask with whom/to whom one did something" (unit 16) is so specific that one suspects its inclusion was prompted by concern with the grammatical structures it generates rather than with a likely

communicative purpose. Thirdly, as the same example illustrates, learning targets sometimes embodied two or more communicative functions which were not closely related semantically. Fourthly, some functions were inaccurately designated; thus it is difficult to accept "How to start a conversation" as a description of the communicative function embodied in "Creidim go bhfuil ..." and "Sílim go bhfaca mé ..." (unit 9). Fifthly, there were cases where an expression was described at the head of a unit as embodying a particular function but within the unit was put to a quite different use. Unit 8, for example, sets as a target "How to make suggestions" and illustrates this by "Má thugann tú ..."; but within the unit most of the phrases beginning with "Má ..." are used in straightforward conditions or warnings. Sixthly, the learning targets often failed to reflect the content of the course as a whole.

Because of these difficulties it was necessary to go through the course book and the corresponding television scripts in very close detail (when the journal-questionnaires were being designed the radio scripts were not available) and attempt to recategorize the learning targets, or at least express them somewhat more consistently, while remaining as close as possible to their original formulation. This exercise revealed that the notional/functional aspect of the course was largely a cosmetic applied to a traditional grammatical orientation. The content and presentation of much of the course made quite plain that the actual (as opposed to the ostensible) learning targets were often grammatical, and this necessarily imposed constraints on the degree to which the learning targets elaborated for the journal-questionnaires could be expressed in genuinely notional/functional terms. Another problem was that the importance given to the different targets in each unit was quite uneven. Moreover, on occasion the television scripts gave substantial coverage to items not listed as targets in the course book. The journal-questionnaires included the learning targets implied by these items.

The third category of information, on how participants reacted to each unit and to its different components, was sought by means of a series of open-ended questions about what they liked about the unit and why, and what they found difficult, followed by a grid in which they were asked to cross-tabulate the elements (television, textbook, radio, other activities) against certain qualities such as helpfulness, interest, enjoyment, cultural value, etc. Participants were also given space to make any other comments they wished.

The journal-questionnaires thus provided readily quantifiable data along with qualitative data that is much less easy to quantify. The research team attempted to approach Seiber's 1976 "tailored evaluation", shaping the research instrument both to the individual learner and to the unit in question, with its discrete targets and its different components.

The decision to rule out any objective test of the level of

competence in Irish achieved by our volunteer subjects was based on the following considerations:

(i) the wide range of levels of competence on entry to the course;

(ii) the adverse psychological effect of any type of examination on adults in a supposedly free-learning situation, particularly if administered in a test centre;

(iii) the difficulty of administering appropriate tests to a scattered population.

0.5 Structure of the report

Part 1 of this report analyses the data elicited by the pre-course questionnaire, and Part 2 analyses the data elicited by the journal-questionnaires. Throughout the report percentages have been adjusted to one decimal place, so that the figures presented in the tables do not always add up to exactly 100%.

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Part 1

Volunteers' background, attitudes and expectations: Results from the pre-course questionnaire

1.1 Profile of volunteers

In assessing the data presented in this section it is important to bear in mind that we are describing not a randomly selected sample of the whole adult population but a group of volunteers whose participation in the project implied an above-average commitment to learning Irish. This group characteristic gives the data its special interest.

1.1.1 Age-range

The age-range of our volunteers was extensive, the youngest being eleven at the time of starting the course and the oldest seventy-seven. However, as Table 1 shows, the majority of our volunteers were aged between twenty-five and forty-five and so belonged to RTÉ's chief target audience for the course (see 0.1 above).

TABLE 1 Age of volunteers at the time of starting the course (N=171)	
Under 25 years	12.3%
25-35 years	35.7%
36-45 years	27.5%
46-55 years	11.7%
56-65 years	7.6%
Over 65 years	2.9%
No response	2.3%

1.1.2 Distribution of sexes

As Table 2 shows, female volunteers outnumbered male volunteers in the ratio 3:1.

TABLE 2 Sex of volunteers (N=171)	
Female	73.1%
Male	25.1%
No response	1.8%

1.1.3 Geographical origins and nationalities

The great majority of our volunteers were born in Ireland (Table 3). All thirty-two counties except Antrim and Kildare are represented among the places of birth mentioned by the 149 volunteers born in Ireland. The most frequently mentioned counties were Dublin (37), Cork (20), and Limerick (14). Only five of the 149 volunteers born in Ireland were born in Northern Ireland.

TABLE 3 Volunteers' countries of birth (N=171)	
Ireland	87.1%
England	5.8%
Scotland	0.6%
New Zealand	0.6%
U.S.A.	1.8%
Canada	1.2%
The Netherlands	1.2%
Norway	0.6%
No response	1.2%

As Table 4 shows, the great majority of our volunteers held Irish nationality. Five volunteers held Irish and some other nationality.

TABLE 4 Volunteers' nationalities (N=171)	
Irish	87.7%
British	3.5%
New Zealand	0.6%
Canadian	0.6%
Dutch	1.2%
Norwegian	0.6%
Dual: British/Irish	1.8%
Dual: American/Irish	0.6%
Dual: Canadian/Irish	0.6%
No response	2.9%

1.1.4 Occupations

TABLE 5 Volunteers' occupations (N=171)	
Architectural technician	0.6%
Barman (and checker at oyster co-operative)	0.6%
Caterer	0.6%
Chemist	1.2%
Child-minder (full-time)	0.6%
Civil servant	5.8%
Clerk/clerical worker	2.9%
Company director	2.9%
Computer scientist	0.6%
Doctor (general practicioner)	1.2%
Driver	0.6%
Farmer/farmer's wife	2.3%
Garda	1.2%
Goods inwards/outwards checker	0.6%
Hair salon manageress	0.6%
Homeworker	0.6%
Hospital services worker	0.6%
Housewife/homemaker/mother	35.1%
Insurance	0.6%
Journalist	0.6%
Laboratory technician	0.6%
Librarian	0.6%
Naíonra supervisor	0.6%
Nurse	3.5%
Occupational therapist	0.6%
Plumber	0.6%
Psychiatrist	0.6%
Railway worker	0.6%
Retired	4.1%
Road safety officer	0.6%
Sales manager	0.6%
Sales representative	0.6%
Secretary	1.2%
Security controller	0.6%
Shift supervisor	1.2%
Shop owner	0.6%
Social worker	0.6%
Soldier	0.6%
Solicitor's apprentice	0.6%
Student/pupil	3.5%
Teacher	9.4%
Technical operative	0.6%
Telephone exchange supervisor	0.6%
Telephonist	1.2%
Unemployed	1.8%
Youth officer	0.6%
No response	3.5%

Volunteers' descriptions of their occupations are summarized in Table 5. The category of (full-time) housewife/homemaker/mother was mentioned far more frequently than any other. It should be noted, however, that individual volunteers who responded with this category mentioned that they had previously worked, respectively, as a teacher (2), a teacher and social worker (1), and a legal executive (1). Conversely, a number of volunteers included under other categories (e.g. company director, nurse, secretary) used formulations like "... and housewife", "homemaker and ...". Former teachers are included in the categories "retired" (1) and "unemployed" (2). As far as categories other than housewife/homemaker/mother are concerned, those referring to "white-collar" occupations predominate.

1.1.5 Family and domestic circumstances

As Tables 6-8 show, 73.2% of our volunteers were or had been married, 63.7% had children, and 86.0% lived in a household rather than alone.

TABLE 6 Volunteers' marital status (N=171)	
Single	25.1%
Married	70.8%
Separated	1.2%
Widowed	1.2%
No response	1.8%

TABLE 7 Percentages of volunteers with and without children (N=171)	
With children	63.7%
Without children	29.8%
No response	6.4%

TABLE 8 Percentages of volunteers living living alone and in households (N=171)	
Alone	11.7%
In household	86.0%
No response	2.3%

1.1.6 Leisure-time pursuits

All but a handful of our volunteers mentioned at least one activity or interest to which they devoted some of their spare time; indeed, most volunteers mentioned more than one (Table 9). The pursuits and interests named most frequently were sport, reading, crafts/homemaking, (unspecified) outdoor activities, music, television/radio, voluntary work, and cinema/theatre (Table 10).

TABLE 9	Numbers of leisure-time pursuits mentioned by volunteers (N=171)
0	5.3%
1	7.0%
2	21.0%
3	37.4%
4	14.6%
5	9.4%
6	3.5%
7	1.8%

TABLE 10	Volunteers' leisure-time pursuits (N=171)
Cinema/theatre	11.1%
Collecting	1.2%
Committee work	1.8%
Crafts/homemaking	44.4%
Dancing	6.4%
Languages	5.3%
Local history	1.2%
Music	29.2%
Outdoor activities (unspecified)	37.4%
Part-time teaching	1.2%
Photography	2.3%
Politics	2.9%
Reading	53.8%
Religion	1.2%
Sport	54.4%
Television/radio	21.0%
Voluntary work	18.1%
Writing	5.8%

1.1.7 General educational experience

The numbers of years that our volunteers spent at various levels of full-time education are set out in Table 11. One striking fact that emerges from this table is that more than two fifths of our volunteers had attended a third-level institution.

TABLE 11 Number of years spent by volunteers in full-time education (N=171)	
PRIMARY SCHOOL	
4 years	0.6%
5 years	2.3%
6 years	10.5%
7 years	22.8%
8 years	43.9%
9 years	11.1%
10 years	5.3%
11 years	1.2%
No response	2.3%
POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL	
1 year	3.5%
2 years	5.3%
3 years	7.6%
4 years	12.3%
5 years	43.3%
6 years	12.9%
7 years	5.8%
8 years	0.6%
No response	8.8%
COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY	
1 year	7.0%
2 years	12.3%
3 years	10.5%
4 years	10.5%
6 years	1.8%
7 years	0.6%
8 years	1.8%
No response	55.6%

Table 12 shows that a large majority of volunteers had followed part-time courses after completing their full-time education. Arts subjects (languages, history, etc.), were easily the most frequently mentioned, though crafts and/or homemaking, professional training, and secretarial skills were also well represented. More than 50% of volunteers reported that they had taken courses in more than one subject area (Table 13). The relative popularity of the different subject areas is indicated by Table 14.

TABLE 12	Volunteers' experience of part-time courses since completing full-time education (N=171)
Had attended part-time courses	69.0%
Had not attended part-time courses	28.7%
No response	2.3%

TABLE 13	Numbers of subject areas in which volunteers reported having taken part-time courses (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had taken such courses: 118)
Entirely unspecific	0.8%
1 subject area	45.8%
2 subject areas	32.2%
3 subject areas	11.9%
4 subject areas	5.1%
5 subject areas	2.5%
No response	1.7%

TABLE 14	Subject areas mentioned by volunteers in respect of part-time courses they had followed (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had taken such courses: 118)
Arts subjects	65.2%
Crafts/homemaking	31.4%
Music	5.1%
Professional training	27.1%
Science subjects (including maths)	7.6%
Secretarial skills	22.9%
Speech/drama	8.5%
Sport	10.2%
Unspecified (entirely or partly)	5.1%

1.2 Volunteers' language history

At the beginning of 1.1 we argued that the interest of the data presented in that section lay in the fact that it described a group of people who by volunteering to take part in the research project declared a special commitment to learning Irish. However, provided one takes differences of age into consideration, there is no reason to suppose that our volunteers differed greatly from the population at large as regards their experience of language learning at school.

1.2.1 Language in the home

As Tables 15-20 show, English was the first and home language of the vast majority of our volunteers. Surprisingly - in view of the fact that Anois is arís was advertised as a "first stage course in spoken Irish" - three of our volunteers reported that they were native-speakers of Irish.

TABLE 15 Volunteers' first languages (N=171)	
English	93.0%
Irish	1.8%
Dutch	1.2%
Norwegian	0.6%
No response	3.5%

TABLE 16 Volunteers' mothers' first languages (N=171)	
English	92.4%
Irish	2.3%
Dutch	1.2%
Norwegian	0.6%
German	1.2%
Irish and English	1.2%
No response	1.2%

TABLE 17	Volunteers' fathers' first languages (N=171)
English	90.6%
Irish	0.6%
Dutch	2.3%
Norwegian	1.8%
German	0.6%
Italian	0.6%
Irish and English	1.2%
German, Irish and English	0.6%
No response	1.8%

TABLE 18	Volunteers' spouses' first languages (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who were married: 125)
English	93.6%
Irish and English	1.6%
French and English	0.8%
Dutch	0.8%
Ukrainian	0.8%
No response	2.4%

TABLE 19	Volunteers' children's first languages (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had children: 109)
English	92.6%
Dutch	0.9%
Irish and English	1.8%
English and Norwegian	0.9%
No response	3.7%

TABLE 20	Languages in general use in volunteers' households (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers living in households: 147)
English	92.5%
Dutch	0.7%
English interspersed with a little Irish	3.4%
Irish and English	2.7%
English and Norwegian	0.7%

1.2.2 Previous experience of learning Irish

Most of our volunteers had learned Irish before at some stage, although the minority of complete beginners was not insignificant (Table 21). The great majority of those who had previously learned Irish had had their first encounter with the language between the ages of four and twelve years (Table 22).

TABLE 21	Percentages of volunteers who had and had not previously learned Irish (N=171)
Had previously learned Irish	88.3%
Had not previously learned Irish	10.5%
No response	1.2%

TABLE 22	Ages at which volunteers had started to learn Irish (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
Before 4 years	2.0%
4-12 years	94.7%
12-18 years	0.0%
After 18 years	2.0%
No response	1.3%

96.7% (146/151) of volunteers who had previously learned Irish had taken it at primary school. Reporting on their experience of learning Irish at that level they mentioned oral slightly more often than written productive activities, but "mechanical" more than twice as often as "creative" productive activities (Table 23). Their receptive learning activities had been almost entirely focussed on the written language (Table 24). 26.7% (39/146) of those who had taken Irish as a subject at primary level had also been taught other subjects through the medium of Irish at that level.

TABLE 23 Volunteers' experience of various kinds of productive learning activities in connexion with learning Irish at primary school

DETAILED DESCRIPTION	No. of times mentioned
1. Repeating individual sounds	115
2. Repeating whole phrases/ sentences	137
3. Oral grammar exercises	120
4. Written grammar exercises	114
5. Essays	130
6. Translations	99
7. Summaries	44
8. Project work	13
9. Free conversation	50
10. Debates	25
ACTIVITY TYPES	
Oral (1,2,3,9,10 above)	447
Written (4,5,6,7,8 above)	420
More "creative" activities (5,7,8,9,10 above)	262
More "mechanical" activities (1,2,3,4,6 above)	605

TABLE 24 Volunteers' experience of various kinds of receptive learning activities in connexion with learning Irish at primary school

DETAILED DESCRIPTION	No. of times mentioned
1. Reading passages from textbooks	125
2. Reading extracts from newspapers, magazines, etc.	31
3. Reading poems, short stories, etc.	106
4. Listening to tapes/ records of speech	15
5. Listening to tapes/ records of songs	13
6. Watching films, television, videotapes	8
ACTIVITY TYPE	
Reading activities (1,2,3)	262
Listening/watching (4,5,6)	36

TABLE 25	Volunteers' experience of various kinds of productive learning activities in connexion with learning Irish at post-primary level

DETAILED DESCRIPTION	No. of times mentioned
1. Repeating individual sounds	89
2. Repeating whole phrases/ sentences	107
3. Oral grammar exercises	113
4. Written grammar exercises	120
5. Essays	122
6. Translations	113
7. Summaries	76
8. Project work	16
9. Free conversation	66
10. Debates	39
ACTIVITY TYPE	
Oral (1,2,3,9,10)	414
Written (4,5,6,7,8)	447
More "creative" (5,7,8,9,10)	319
More "mechanical" (1,2,3,4,6)	542

86.8% (131/151) of volunteers who had previously learned Irish had taken it at post-primary school. For this level our volunteers reported written slightly more often than oral productive activities, and although "mechanical" were again reported more often than "creative" productive activities, the disproportion was less than that reported for primary level (Table 25; cp. Table 23). At post-primary level as at primary level our volunteers' receptive learning activities were focussed almost entirely on the written language (Table 26; cp. Table 24). 29.0% (38/131) of those who had taken Irish as a subject at post-primary level had also been taught other subjects through the medium of Irish at this level.

A clear overall impression emerges from our volunteers' accounts of the learning activities they engaged in while learning Irish at school. It is that the usual objective of such activities was to assist learners in mastering the formal system of Irish and/or in gaining access to Irish literature, and that activities likely to prepare learners for natural everyday communication through Irish were relatively rare.

TABLE 26	Volunteers' experience of various kinds of receptive learning activities in connexion with learning Irish at post-primary level

DETAILED DESCRIPTION	No. of times mentioned
1. Reading passages from textbooks	114
2. Reading extracts from newspapers, magazines, etc.	57
3. Reading poems, short stories etc.	111
4. Listening to tapes/records of speech	16
5. Listening to tapes/records of songs	7
6. Watching films/television/ videotapes	9
ACTIVITY TYPE	
Reading (1,2,3)	282
Listening/watching (4,5,6)	32

TABLE 27	Numbers of types of Irish courses other than school courses individual volunteers reported they had taken (Percentages relate to the total number of volunteers who reported having taken such courses: 70)

One type of course	77.1%
Two types of course	11.4%
Three types of course	2.9%
No response	8.6%

TABLE 28	Types of Irish courses other than school courses taken by volunteers (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who reported having taken such courses: 70)
Conradh na Gaeilge courses	8.6%
Evening courses (unspecified)	12.9%
Evening courses in local national school	1.4%
Gaeleagras na Seirbhíse Poiblí courses	10.0%
Gael Linn courses	11.4%
Gaeltacht courses	18.6%
Irish conversation groups	1.4%
Linguaphone	1.4%
Ógra Éireann courses	1.4%
Private courses	1.4%
Residential courses in Irish colleges	2.9%
RTÉ courses	7.1%
Teacher training courses	2.9%
Teastas Tinreamh courses	1.4%
University B.A. courses	11.4%
University extra-mural courses	1.4%
VEC courses	11.4%

46.4% (70/151) of volunteers who had previously learned Irish had followed a course in Irish other than a school course. This is further evidence of the group's above-average interest in learning Irish. Most volunteers mentioned only one such course, but some mentioned two or more (Table 27). The frequency with which different courses were mentioned is set out in Table 28. The proportions of learning activities reported for these courses differ markedly from those reported for school courses. Oral productive exercises were reported twice as often as written productive exercises; and although "mechanical" again outweighed "creative" productive exercises, it was only in the ratio 3:2 (Table 29; cp. Tables 23 and 25). As regards receptive learning activities, listening/watching was reported almost as often as reading (Table 30; cp. Tables 24 and 26). What this appears to suggest is that learners who had followed a course in Irish other than a school course were likely to be equipped with a greater range of communicative skills in spoken Irish than learners who had learned Irish only at school.

TABLE 29 Volunteers' experience of various kinds of productive learning activities in connexion with Irish courses other than school courses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION	No. of times mentioned
1. Repeating individual sounds	48
2. Repeating whole phrases/ sentences	58
3. Oral grammar exercises	46
4. Written grammar exercises	25
5. Essays	22
6. Translations	36
7. Summaries	24
8. Project work	16
9. Free conversation	56
10. Debates	30
ACTIVITY TYPE	
Oral (1,2,3,9,10)	238
Written (4,5,6,7,8)	123
More "creative" (5,7,8,9,10)	148
More "mechanical" (1,2,3,4,6)	213

TABLE 30 Volunteers' experience of various kinds of receptive learning activities in connexion with Irish courses other than school courses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION	No. of times mentioned
1. Reading passages from textbooks	34
2. Reading extracts from newspapers, magazines, etc.	20
3. Reading poems, short stories etc.	31
4. Listening to tapes/records of speech	30
5. Listening to tapes/records of songs	26
6. Watching films/television/ videotapes	18
ACTIVITY TYPE	
Reading (1,2,3)	85
Listening/watching (4,5,6)	74

In response to a request to rate their knowledge of Irish on a four-point scale - "very good", "good", "quite good", "weak" - volunteers who had previously learned the language opted for "weak" more often than for any other category (Table 31).

TABLE 31	Volunteers' assessment of their knowledge of Irish (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
Very good	6.6%
Good	23.8%
Quite good	23.8%
Weak	45.7%

Asked to specify which of the four language skills (understanding speech, reading, speaking, writing) they performed best in Irish, 80.8% of volunteers who had previously learned Irish specified one skill, 9.9% specified two, 3.3% specified three, 4.6% claimed to perform all four equally well, and 1.3% did not respond. The frequency with which each of the skills was mentioned in this connexion is shown in Table 32. As one might expect, the receptive skills (understanding speech and reading) were more often mentioned in this context than the productive skills (speaking and writing): in any language we are customarily able to understand more than we can produce.

TABLE 32	What volunteers claimed to "do best" in Irish (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
Understanding speech	36.4%
Reading	44.4%
Speaking	26.5%
Writing	21.8%

As for skills volunteers thought they performed least well in Irish, 83.4% of volunteers who had previously learned Irish specified one such skill, 9.3% specified two, 4.0% specified three, and 3.3% did not specify any. The frequency with which each skill was mentioned in this connexion is displayed in Table 33. On this occasion, again as one might expect, references to the productive skills predominate.

TABLE 33	What volunteers claimed to do "least well" in Irish (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
Understanding speech	26.5%
Reading	19.2%
Speaking	33.8%
Writing	33.8%

As regards the use of Irish outside the classroom, Tables 34 and 35 show that 44.4% of volunteers who had previous learned the language had spoken Irish with native speakers, while 54.3% had spoken Irish with non-native speakers.

TABLE 34	Percentages of volunteers who had and had not spoken Irish with native speakers outside Irish classes (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
Had spoken Irish with native speaker	44.4%
Had not spoken Irish with native speaker	55.6%

TABLE 35	Percentages of volunteers who had and had not spoken Irish with non-native speakers outside Irish classes (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
Had spoken Irish with non-native speaker	54.3%
Had not spoken Irish with non-native speaker	43.7%
No response	2.0%

In response to the question "What did you enjoy most about learning Irish?" the majority of volunteers mentioned one or two factors (Table 36). Table 37 shows the frequency with which the different factors were mentioned, and Table 38 presents the same data in eight broad categories. It should be noted that cultural/patriotic reasons were almost as prominent as those associated with using Irish as a medium of communication.

TABLE 36	Numbers of factors mentioned by individual volunteers in response to the question "What did you enjoy most about learning Irish?" (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
"Nothing"	7.9%
1 factor	45.0%
2 factors	35.8%
3 factors	4.0%
"Everything"	1.3%
No response	6.0%

TABLE 37	What volunteers enjoyed most about learning Irish (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
"Nothing"	7.9%
Attractiveness of learning materials	0.7%
The challenge	2.6%
Competitive dimension	0.7%
Comradeship with other learners	2.0%
Contact with Gaeltacht	1.3%
Contact with Irish culture in general	7.9%
Contact with Irish literature	7.9%
Contact with Irish songs	1.3%
The fact that Irish was easy to learn	3.3%
The fact that Irish was not compulsory	0.7%
The language itself	18.5%
The learning process itself	1.3%
Listening to Irish	5.3%
The novelty of the experience	0.7%
Patriotic dimension	20.0%
Professional dimension	0.7%
Reading Irish	9.3%
Self-expression in Irish generally	5.3%
Sense of achievement	17.2%
Speaking Irish	16.6%
Teaching approach	0.7%
Translating	0.7%
Writing Irish	4.0%
"Everything"	1.3%

TABLE 38	What volunteers enjoyed most about learning Irish restated in eight broad categories (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
Learning materials/ teaching approach	1.3%
Learning process	27.8%
Using Irish	42.4%
Cultural/patriotic reasons	37.1%
The language itself	18.5%
"Everything"	1.3%
"Nothing"	7.9%
Other reasons	1.3%

In response to the question "What did you enjoy least about learning Irish?" the majority of those volunteers who had learned the language mentioned only one factor (Table 39). Table 40 shows the frequency with which the different factors were mentioned, and Table 41 presents the same data in eight broad categories. The dominant category in Table 41 - "the language itself" - is mostly made up of the "grammar" category in Table 40; and while it may be the case that many of our volunteers disliked Irish grammar for its own sake, it is possible that their dislike stemmed also from the position given to grammar in their learning materials and in the approach adopted by their teachers.

TABLE 39	Numbers of factors mentioned by individual volunteers in response to the question "What did you enjoy least about learning Irish?" (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
"Nothing"	4.0%
1 factor	67.5%
2 factors	15.2%
3 factors	0.7%
"Everything"	1.3%
No response	11.3%

TABLE 40	What volunteers enjoyed least about learning Irish (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
"Nothing"	4.0%
Cynicism from others	0.7%
Dialectical variation	0.7%
Difference between textbook Irish and native-speaker Irish	0.7%
Emphasis on grammar and written Irish	2.0%
Emphasis on need to acquire blas	1.3%
Examinations	0.7%
The fact that Irish was compulsory	2.6%
Frustration at slow rate of progress	1.3%
Grammar	41.0%
Having to do other subjects through Irish	1.3%
Incomprehension	1.3%
Lack of opportunity to use Irish	4.0%
Nationalistic associations of Irish	0.7%
Native-speaker attitudes	0.7%
Old Irish texts	0.7%
Orthography	4.0%
Particular learning environment	2.0%
Pronouncing Irish	1.3%
Reading Irish	0.7%
Restricted subject matter	0.7%
Sense of inadequacy	6.6%
Solitariness of experience	1.3%
Teaching approach	15.9%
Vocabulary	4.6%
Writing Irish	3.3%
"Everything"	1.3%

TABLE 41	What volunteers enjoyed least about learning Irish restated in eight broad categories (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had previously learned Irish: 151)
Learning materials/ teaching approach	20.5%
Learning process	6.0%
Using Irish	4.0%
Cultural/patriotic factors	1.3%
The language itself	51.7%
"Everything"	1.3%
"Nothing"	4.0%
Other factors	16.6%

1.2.3 Experience of learning languages other than Irish

Since the sample was recruited through the medium of English and all questionnaires were drafted in English, it is to be assumed that all volunteers had learned English at some stage. 73.7% of our 171 volunteers had learned one or more languages other than Irish and English; over half of them had learned more than one "other language" (Table 42). The frequency with which each "other language" was mentioned is shown in Table 43. The dominance of French is entirely predictable given its traditional role in the Irish school curriculum; and the relative frequency with which German, Spanish and Italian were reported corresponds broadly to their current distribition in the schools. However, the fact that Latin is the second most often mentioned "other language" must be largely due to the age range of our volunteers, for it no longer occupies such a relatively strong position in the schools.

TABLE 42	Numbers of "other languages" learned by individual volunteers (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had learned "other languages": 126)
1 language	46.8%
2 languages	34.9%
3 languages	14.3%
4 languages	4.0%

TABLE 43	Languages other than Irish and English learned by volunteers (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had learned "other languages": 126)
Arabic	1.6%
French	88.9%
German	18.2%
Greek	4.8%
Italian	8.7%
Latin	34.1%
Norwegian	0.8%
Russian	0.8%
Spanish	14.3%
Turkish	2.4%

The majority of volunteers who answered the question "What did you enjoy most about learning this language/these languages?" mentioned one or two factors (Table 44). Table 45 shows the frequency with which the different reasons were mentioned, and Table 46 presents the same data in eight broad categories. Here the communicative dimension is clearly dominant, whereas in the case of Irish the communicative dimension was scarcely more prominent than the cultural/patriotic dimension (see above, 1.2.2, Table 38).

TABLE 44	Numbers of factors mentioned by individual volunteers in response to the question "What did you enjoy most about learning this language/ these languages" (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had learned "other languages": 126)
"Nothing"	5.5%
1 factor	48.4%
2 factors	29.4%
3 factors	3.2%
4 factors	4.0%
5 factors	1.6%
No response	7.9%

TABLE 45	What volunteers enjoyed most about learning languages other than Irish and English (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had learned "other languages": 126)
Nothing	5.5%
The ability to communicate in a foreign language	14.3%
The attractiveness of learning materials	4.0%
The challenge	5.5%
Comparing different languages	0.8%
Contact with foreign culture in general	4.8%
Contact with foreign literature	1.6%
Contact with foreign songs	1.6%
Finding out the origins of words	5.5%
The language itself/ languages themselves	17.5%
The learning process itself	8.7%
Listening to the language(s)	4.8%
The novelty of the experience	1.6%
Professional dimension	2.4%
Reading the language(s)	13.5%
Self-expression in the language(s) in general	0.8%
Sense of achievement	4.8%
Speaking the language(s)	24.6%
Teaching approach	6.3%
TV/radio programmes in the language(s)	1.6%
Translating	3.2%
Travel aspects	8.7%
Usefulness of language(s) for exams	0.8%
Writing the language(s)	1.6%

TABLE 46	What volunteers enjoyed most about learning languages other than Irish and English restated in eight broad categories (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had learned "other languages": 126)
Learning materials/ teaching approach	4.0%
Learning process	27.0%
Using foreign language(s)	71.4%
Cultural factors	9.5%
The language itself/ languages themselves	17.5%
"Everything"	0.0%
"Nothing"	5.5%
Other reasons	9.5%

The majority of volunteers who answered the question "What did you enjoy least about learning languages other than English and Irish?" mentioned only one factor (Table 47). Table 48 shows the frequency with which the different factors were mentioned, and Table 49 presents the same data in eight broad categories. As in the case of Irish so here the dominant category is "the language itself"; and again the chief component of this category is "grammar" (Table 48). Once more it seems likely that at least some of our volunteers' dislike of grammar stemmed from the position it occupied in their learning materials and in their teachers' approach. It should be noted that pronunciation,

TABLE 47	Number of factors mentioned by individual volunteers in response to the question "What did you enjoy least about learning this language/these languages?" (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had learned "other languages": 126)
"Nothing"	4.8%
1 factor	61.9%
2 factors	16.7%
3 factors	4.0%
"Everything"	1.6%
No response	11.1%

specified as a cause of dislike by only 1.3% of learners of Irish (Table 40), was mentioned as a cause of dislike by 9.5% of learners of "other languages" (Table 48). A possible reason for this is the emphasis traditionally placed on pronunciation in the teaching of French.

TABLE 48 What volunteers enjoyed least about learning languages other than Irish and English (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had learned "other languages": 126)	
"Nothing"	4.8%
Confusion between languages	0.8%
Dictation	0.8%
(Unspecified) difficulties	2.4%
Effort involved	4.0%
Examinations	0.8%
Frustration at slow rate of progress	4.8%
Getting started	0.8%
Grammar	44.4%
Historical studies	0.8%
Incomprehension	2.4%
Lack of books	0.8%
Lack of opportunity to use language(s)	1.6%
Lack of oral work	4.8%
Literary studies	2.4%
Memory work	0.8%
Orthography	2.4%
Particular learning environment	1.6%
Pronouncing the language(s)	9.5%
Sense of inadequacy	5.5%
Solitariness of the experience	0.8%
Speaking the language(s)	2.4%
Teaching approach	11.1%
Vocabulary	0.8%
Writing the language(s)	3.2%
"Everything"	1.6%

TABLE 49	What volunteers enjoyed least about learning languages other than Irish and English restated in eight broad categories. (Percentages relate to total number of volunteers who had learned "other languages": 126)
Learning materials/ teaching approach	11.9%
Learning approach	17.5%
Using foreign language(s)	5.5%
Cultural factors	3.2%
The language itself/ languages themselves	57.1%
"Everything"	1.6%
"Nothing"	4.8%
Other reasons	14.3%

1.3 Volunteers' intentions and expectations with regard to Anois is Arís and their future use of Irish

As in 1.1 so here the chief interest of the data is that it helps to define a group of people whose participation in the project indicates an above-average commitment to the Irish language.

1.3.1 Reasons for following Anois is Arís

Most volunteers who answered the question "Why did you decide to learn Irish/improve your Irish?" gave one or two reasons (Table 50). Table 51 shows the frequency with which the different reasons were mentioned, and Table 52 restates the same data in five broad categories. The overtly communicative dimension seems to be rather more prominent here than it was among the things volunteers reported they had most enjoyed about learning Irish (Table 38). A large component of the "other reasons" category in Table 52 is the desire to be able to help children with their studies (Table 51). Presumably this is connected with the relatively large proportion of housewives/mothers among our volunteers (see above, 1.1.4, Table 5). It is worth noting that only 5.3% of our volunteers wanted to learn Irish/improve their Irish in order to understand radio or television broadcasts in Irish.

TABLE 50	Numbers of reasons mentioned by individual volunteers in response to the question "Why did you decide to learn Irish/ improve your Irish?" (N=171)
1 reason	39.8%
2 reasons	38.6%
3 reasons	9.9%
4 reasons	4.1%
5 reasons	0.6%
6 reasons	0.6%
No response	6.4%

TABLE 51 Why volunteers decided to learn Irish/improve their Irish (N=171)	
To "break hegemony of professional Gaelgeoirí"	0.6%
Because of the challenge	1.2%
For cultural reasons	5.8%
Out of curiosity	1.8%
Because they enjoyed the language learning process	6.4%
In order to be able to express themselves in Irish	4.7%
Because of family interest	1.2%
To fulfil a long-standing desire	2.9%
To have more contact with the Gaeltacht	2.9%
To be able to help children with studies	22.2%
Because of an interest in the language itself	16.3%
To recover a lost facility in Irish	9.9%
To maintain facility in Irish	4.7%
To be able to "mystify people on buses"	0.6%
For patriotic reasons	22.8%
For professional reasons	5.8%
To be able to read Irish	5.3%
To gain a sense of achievement	4.1%
To remedy a sense of inadequacy	12.9%
Because they had liked Smidiríní	1.2%
For social reasons	0.6%
To be able to speak Irish	24.6%
To be able to understand Irish	2.9%
To be able to understand TV/radio programmes in Irish	5.3%
To be able to write Irish	3.5%
No response	6.4%

TABLE 52	Why volunteers decided to learn Irish/improve their Irish restated in five broad categories (N=171)
Learning process	11.7%
Using Irish	49.7%
Cultural/patriotic dimension	28.6%
The language itself	31.0%
Other reasons	49.1%

The great majority of volunteers gave one or two reasons for deciding to follow Anois is Arís (Table 53). The reasons volunteers gave (Table 54) were a little less varied than (and to some extent overlapped with) responses to the more general question discussed above. The most prominent reasons had to do with the obvious advantages of studying at home with television/radio courses: convenience, a liking for the broadcast media, and the opportunity for the family to learn together. Although few volunteers listed advertising itself as their reason for following Anois is Arís, some of the other reasons given echo themes implied by the advertising that heralded the course: "suitable for particular needs/level", "new approach", "structure of course".

TABLE 53	Numbers of reasons mentioned by individual volunteers in response to the question "Why did you decide specifically to follow the RTÉ course?" (N=171)
1 reason	54.4%
2 reasons	35.7%
3 reasons	5.8%
4 reasons	1.2%
No response	2.9%

TABLE 54 Why volunteers decided specifically to follow the RTÉ course (N=171)	
Advertising	4.8%
Audio-visual aspect	2.3%
Book	5.3%
Cheapness	2.3%
Convenience	45.0%
Curiosity	1.8%
Suitability for everyday usage	0.6%
Examination purposes	0.6%
Possible for family to study together	14.6%
Multi-media aspect	0.6%
Suitable for particular needs/level	14.0%
New approach	6.4%
No other suitable course available	11.1%
Possible to record units	0.6%
Repeats	1.8%
Liked Smidiríní	4.1%
To be able to speak Irish	8.8%
Structure of course	7.6%
Teaching purposes	3.5%
Liked TV/radio as media	12.9%
No response	2.9%

1.3.2 Intentions with regard to different components of the Anois is Arís package

The majority of our volunteers stated that they would follow the television and radio course, that they would use the course book, and that they would find someone to practise speaking Irish with (Tables 55, 56, 57 and 60). On the other hand only 29.2% of our volunteers expressed a definite intention to join a support group, and only 25.7% said they would definitely attend evening classes (Tables 58 and 59).

TABLE 55 Volunteers' intentions with regard to the television course (N=171)	
Would follow TV course	95.3%
Would not follow TV course	3.5%
No response	1.2%

TABLE 56	Volunteers' intentions with regard to the radio course (N=171)
Would follow radio course	84.2%
Would not follow radio course	6.4%
"Don't know"	3.5%
No response	5.8%

TABLE 57	Volunteers' intentions with regard to the course book (N=171)
Would use course book	94.2%
Would not use course book	0.6%
"Don't know"	1.2%
No response	4.1%

TABLE 58	Volunteers' intentions with regard to support groups (N=171)
Would join support group	29.2%
Would not join support group	43.3%
"Don't know"	11.7%
No response	15.8%

TABLE 59	Volunteers' intentions with regard to evening classes (N=171)
Would attend evening classes	25.7%
Would not attend evening classes	50.9%
"Don't know"	9.4%
No response	14.0%

TABLE 60	Volunteers' intentions with regard to finding someone to practise speaking Irish with (N=171)
Would find someone to practise with	81.3%
Would not find someone to practise with	8.2%
"Don't know"	2.9%
No response	7.6%

1.3.3 Intentions and expectations with regard to future use of Irish

All but a handful of volunteers responded affirmatively to the question "Do you want eventually to be able to use Irish as a means of communication?" (Table 61). Two thirds of our volunteers said that they wished to use Irish to communicate with one or two categories of people (Table 62). Table 63 shows the frequency with which different categories were mentioned. The strongest tendency is towards the use of Irish as a language of home and family life.

TABLE 61	Volunteers' response to the question "Do you want eventually to be able to use Irish as a means of communication?" (N=171)
Yes	94.2%
No	5.3%
No response	0.6%

TABLE 62	Numbers of categories of persons mentioned by individual volunteers in response to the question "With whom [do you want eventually to be able to use Irish as a means of communication]?" (N=171)
1 category	42.7%
2 categories	23.4%
3 categories	12.3%
4 categories	2.9%
No response	18.7%

TABLE 63	Categories of persons with whom volunteers wished eventually to be able to use Irish as a means of communication (N=171)
"Anyone"	18.7%
Their children	17.5%
Their children's teachers	0.6%
Their colleagues	8.8%
Members of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann	0.6%
Customers/clients/patients	2.3%
Fainne wearers	1.2%
Various family members	25.7%
Friends	19.9%
Native speakers	14.0%
Neighbours/local people	2.3%
Non-native speakers	7.0%
Other learners	1.8%
Their pupils	2.9%
Their spouses	7.0%
Young people	4.7%
No response	18.7%

Most volunteers mentioned one or two sets of circumstances in which they wanted to be able to use Irish as a means of communication (Table 64). Table 65 shows the frequency with which different sets of circumstances were mentioned. Again greatest prominence was given to the use of the language in the home.

TABLE 64	Numbers of sets of circumstances mentioned by individual volunteers in response to the question "... under what circumstances [do you want eventually to be able to use Irish as a means of communication]?" (N=171)
1 set of circumstances	40.3%
2 sets of circumstances	29.8%
3 sets of circumstances	8.8%
4 sets of circumstances	0.6%
5 sets of circumstances	0.6%
No response	19.9%

TABLE 65 Circumstances under which volunteers wished eventually to be able to use Irish as a means of communication (N=171)	
For broadcasting	0.6%
At children's examination times	0.6%
At children's school	0.6%
At Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann	0.6%
At Conradh na Gaeilge	1.2%
For form-filling	0.6%
In the Gaeltacht	9.9%
On holiday	3.5%
At home	39.2%
Locally	4.1%
Occasionally	3.5%
For reading	2.3%
At own school	1.2%
In shops, banks etc.	6.4%
Socially	18.7%
For speaking	0.6%
For watching TV/listening to radio programmes in Irish	6.4%
Whenever possible	10.5%
At work	19.3%
For writing	2.3%
Specifically for writing poetry in Irish	1.2%
No response	19.9%

About two thirds of our volunteers said they expected Irish to be of some practical benefit in their daily lives (Table 66). When it came to specifying actual ways in which Irish would be of practical benefit, however, they were not very forthcoming. The non-response rate for this question was high, many responses were extremely vague (formulated in terms such as "future use", "throughout daily life", etc.), and many of the more specific answers duplicated responses to the question on circumstances in which volunteers wanted to be able to communicate through Irish. Volunteers who answered this question mostly mentioned only one way in which Irish would be of practical benefit (Table 67). The frequency of references to each is given in Table 68.

TABLE 66	Volunteers' responses to the question "Do you expect Irish to be of any practical benefit in your daily life?" (N=171)
Yes	64.3%
No	31.6%
No response	4.1%

TABLE 67	Numbers of ways in which Irish was expected to be of practical benefit by individual volunteers (N=171)
1 way	47.4%
2 ways	9.9%
3 ways	4.1%
No response	38.6%

TABLE 68	Ways in which volunteers expected Irish to be of practical benefit in their daily lives (N=171)
Vague response	17.5%
For helping children with their studies	12.3%
For encouraging children to use Irish in their everday lives	2.9%
In the Gaeltacht	1.2%
At home	1.2%
For understanding lectures	0.6%
For encouraging others to speak Irish	0.6%
For reading	7.6%
Socially	1.8%
For understanding songs	0.6%
For speaking	7.0%
For understanding TV/ radio programmes	8.8%
At work	17.5%
No response	38.6%

Part 2

Learning experience: Results from the journal-questionnaires

In this part of the report it is necessary to distinguish between respondents and course participants. For any week of the course respondents are those who returned journal-questionnaires, irrespective of whether or not they participated in that week's unit of Anois is Arís; course participants for the same week are those who returned journal-questionnaires and in them reported that they had used at least one component of Anois is Arís in that week.

At several points in Part 1 we drew attention to the fact that the subjects of this research project implied by their participation in the project an interest in Irish and a commitment to learning the language that were above average. This would lead us to expect a generally positive rather than negative response to a new experience of learning Irish, so that any signs of negative or unfavourable response to the Anois is Arís package must be looked at very carefully. It should also be remembered that the great majority of our volunteers had learned Irish previously (see above, 1.2.2, Table 21) and more than half of those who had learned Irish rated their competence in the language as "very good", "good" or "quite good" (see above, 1.2.2, Table 31). Thus for many of them the likely effect of the course would have been to reawaken a dormant knowledge rather than teach something that was not already known.

2.1 Rates of response to the project and participation in Anois is Arís

2.1.1 Response rates for the journal-questionnaires

Altogether 167 of the 171 volunteers who filled in the pre-course questionnaire also returned journal-questionnaires. Table 69 shows the percentage of these volunteers who returned journal-questionnaires for each unit. Overall the response rate shows a predictable downward trend, with a sharp decline before Christmas (units 1-6), a small recovery immediately after Christmas (unit 7), and a shallower decline to the end of the course (units 8-20) interrupted by only two minimal recoveries (units 9 and 16). The rate of decline is broadly comparable to those recorded for volunteer groups participating in research associated with various BBC multi-media language courses (Rybak 1980, pp.13 and 43). It should be noted,

TABLE 69 Weekly response rate for the project (N=167)

Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Nos responding	162	150	131	116	102	100	106	93	95	90	90	84	80	74	65	67	67	57	57	47
% responding	97.0	89.8	78.4	69.5	61.1	59.9	63.5	55.7	56.9	53.9	53.9	50.3	47.9	44.3	38.9	40.1	40.1	34.1	34.1	28.1

however, that Table 69 does not show an absolute drop-out rate; volunteers who returned journal-questionnaires for (say) the seventeenth week of the course may well not have done so for the fifteenth or sixteenth week.

Table 70 shows the percentages of volunteers who returned different numbers of journal-questionnaires.

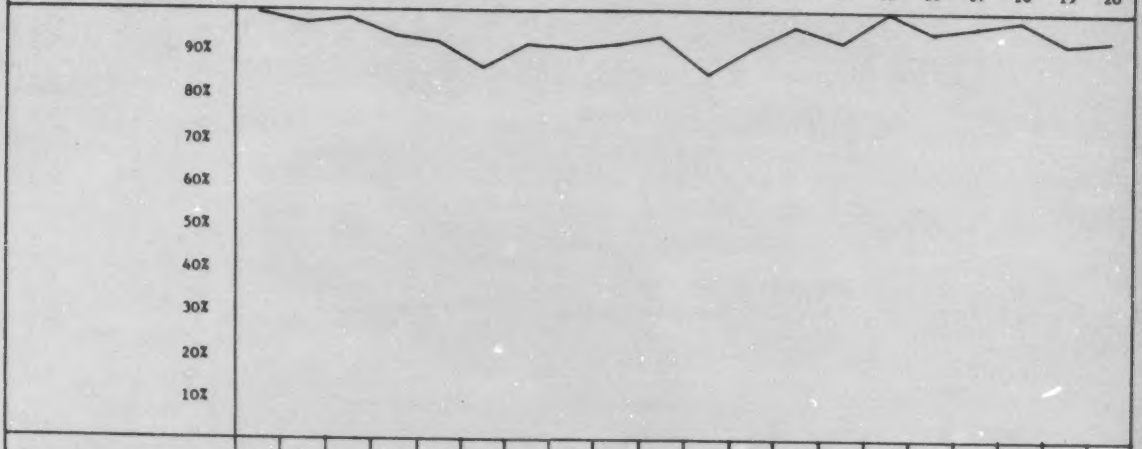
TABLE 70 Percentages of volunteers who returned different numbers of journal-questionnaires (N=167)	
No. of journal-questionnaires	
1	6.6%
2	6.6%
3	4.2%
4	6.6%
5	7.2%
6	4.2%
7	4.2%
8	2.4%
9	3.6%
10	1.8%
11	6.0%
12	4.2%
13	3.0%
14	3.6%
15	2.4%
16	1.2%
17	0.6%
18	8.4%
19	11.4%
20	12.0%

2.1.2 Rates at which respondents used the different elements in the Anois is Arís package

The percentage of each week's respondents who were also course participants dropped below 90% in only two weeks (Table 71).

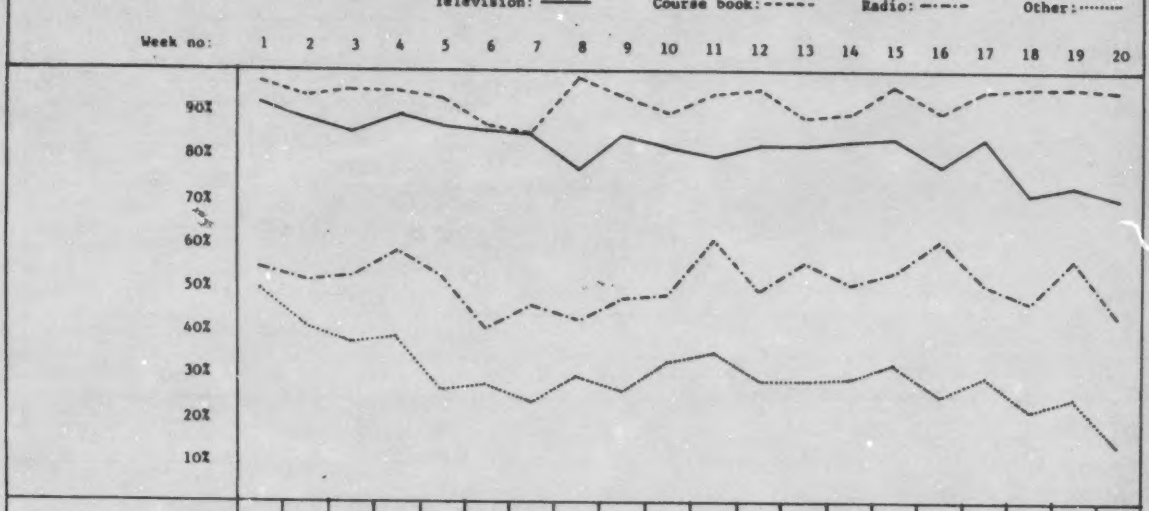
Of the four elements in the Anois is Arís package, course participants followed the course book most often, then the television programmes, then the radio programmes, and finally other course-related activities (Table 72). This hierarchy of use is not quite the one predicted by the results of the pre-

TABLE 71 Percentage of each week's respondents who participated in Anois is Aris



Nos of respondents	162	150	131	116	102	100	106	93	95	90	90	84	80	74	65	67	67	57	57	47
% participating in Anois is Aris	99.4	97.3	97.7	94.0	93.1	87.0	92.5	91.4	92.6	94.4	85.6	91.7	96.3	93.2	100.0	95.5	97.0	98.2	93.0	93.6

TABLE 72 Percentages of each week's course participants using each of the four elements in the Anois is Aris package



Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
% watching TV programme	92.6	89.0	85.9	89.9	87.4	86.2	85.7	77.6	85.2	82.4	80.5	83.1	83.1	84.1	84.6	78.1	84.6	71.4	73.6	70.5
% using course book	97.5	94.5	95.3	95.4	93.7	87.4	85.7	98.8	94.3	90.6	94.8	96.1	89.6	91.3	96.9	90.6	95.4	96.4	96.2	95.6
% listening to radio	54.7	51.4	52.3	58.7	52.6	40.2	45.9	42.4	47.7	48.2	61.0	49.4	55.8	50.7	53.8	60.9	50.8	46.4	56.6	43.2
% participating in other activities	49.7	41.1	37.5	38.5	26.3	27.6	23.5	29.4	26.1	32.9	35.1	28.6	28.6	29.0	32.3	25.0	29.2	21.4	24.5	13.6
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53	44

TABLE 73 Percentages of each week's course participants using different combinations of elements in the Anois is Aris package

Combinations \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
TV/book/radio/other	24.8	21.2	19.5	17.4	9.5	12.6	10.2	9.4	15.9	14.1	19.5	16.9	19.5	17.4	23.1	15.6	13.8	8.9	13.2	9.1
TV/book/radio	24.2	24.0	24.2	30.3	33.7	18.4	23.5	18.8	21.6	22.4	24.7	16.9	26.0	20.3	21.5	28.1	24.6	19.6	24.5	18.2
TV/book/other	21.7	17.1	14.8	16.5	11.6	11.5	8.2	10.6	8.0	15.3	10.4	9.1	6.5	10.1	7.7	6.3	12.3	8.9	7.5	4.5
Book/radio/other	1.9	1.4	2.3	3.7	4.2	2.3	3.1	4.7	2.3	3.5	3.9	2.6	1.3	1.4	--	1.6	1.5	3.6	3.8	--
TV/book	19.3	21.2	22.7	21.1	26.3	31.0	29.6	37.6	34.1	21.2	20.8	36.4	20.8	27.5	29.2	18.8	29.2	30.4	24.5	34.1
Book/radio	3.1	4.1	6.3	4.6	4.2	6.9	6.1	8.2	6.8	5.9	9.1	11.7	7.8	8.7	6.2	10.9	9.2	12.5	15.1	15.9
Book/other	1.2	1.4	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.1	2.0	4.7	--	--	1.3	--	1.3	--	1.5	1.6	1.5	--	--	--
TV/radio	0.6	0.7	--	2.8	1.1	--	3.1	1.2	1.1	2.4	3.9	1.3	1.3	2.9	3.1	4.7	1.5	1.8	--	--
TV	1.9	4.8	4.7	1.8	5.3	12.6	11.2	--	4.5	7.1	1.3	2.6	9.1	5.8	--	4.7	3.1	1.8	3.8	4.5
Book	1.2	4.1	4.7	0.9	3.2	3.4	3.1	4.7	5.7	8.2	5.2	2.6	6.5	5.8	7.7	7.8	3.1	12.5	7.5	13.6
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53	44

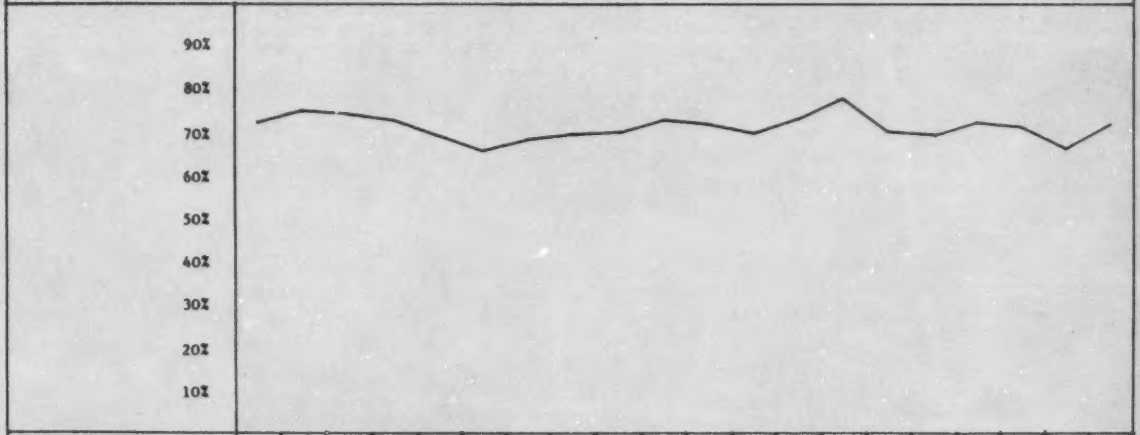
course questionnaire, where the television programmes were placed just above the course book (see above, 1 3.2, Tables 55-59), but it is very much what one would expect. The course book was available to learners at all times; television is a more popular medium than radio; and participation in other course-related activities demanded the greatest commitment of all, since these activities were not home-based and were unlikely to offer the learner the same flexibility of alternative times as the television and radio broadcasts did. Of the four elements in the package the course book held up best, with almost the same percentage of course participants reporting that they had used it in the last week of the course as in the first week. However, Table 72 tells us nothing about how the course book was used from week to week or for how long, though it was likely to be the chief private study resource of most learners. Overall Table 72 shows a decline in course participants' use of the television programmes, with sharper dips at units 8, 16, and 18. Course participants' use of the radio programmes shows much greater fluctuation than their use of the television programmes, but overall the downward trend is less for radio than for television. Course participants' use of course-related activities shows the greatest decline, beginning near the level predicted in the pre-course questionnaires (see above, 1.3.2, Tables 58 and 59) but falling away sharply in the first four and last three weeks of the course.

Table 73 shows the different combinations in which the four elements of the Anois is Arís package were used. Clearly individual learners could and did use different combinations from week to week. Overall the four most commonly occurring combinations were: television/book/radio/other; television/book/radio; television/book/other; and television/book. Of these four combinations the best sustained throughout the course were television/book/radio and television/book, the other two suffering from the general decline of participation in other course-related activities. The data presented in Table 73 suggest that most course participants responded positively to the multi-media conception of Anois is Arís. In each week a very small proportion of course participants used only one element of the package, and for the great majority the course book and the television programme jointly formed the basis of their weekly learning.

2.1.3 Rates of private study reported by respondents

As Table 74 shows, a consistently high proportion of respondents week by week reported that they had done some private study in Irish: never less than 66.0% (unit 6) and on one occasion as high as 78.4% (unit 14). Each week course-related private study was proportionately more frequently reported than

TABLE 74 Percentages of each week's respondents reporting that they had done some private study in that week



Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
% reporting private study	72.8	75.3	74.8	73.3	69.6	66.0	68.9	69.9	70.5	73.3	72.2	70.2	73.8	78.4	70.8	70.2	73.1	71.9	66.7	72.3
Nos reporting private study	118	113	98	85	71	66	73	65	67	66	65	59	59	58	46	47	49	41	38	34
Nos of respondents	162	150	131	116	102	100	106	93	95	90	90	84	80	74	65	67	67	57	57	47

TABLE 75 Percentages of respondents doing private study each week who reported that their private study was (a) course-related, (b) non-course-related

Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
% doing course-related private study	80.5	68.1	79.6	68.2	77.5	75.8	74.0	83.1	82.1	77.3	76.9	67.8	76.3	70.7	84.8	76.6	75.5	75.6	76.3	70.6
% doing non-course-related private study	28.8	45.1	33.7	36.5	29.6	39.4	26.0	16.9	22.4	36.4	29.4	35.6	39.0	41.4	34.8	31.9	28.6	19.5	31.6	35.3
Nos doing private study	118	113	98	85	71	66	73	65	67	66	65	59	59	58	46	47	49	41	38	34

TABLE 76 Percentages of each week's participants in private study who reported that they had done different amounts of private study

Hours of private study \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1 hour	78.0	73.5	75.5	72.9	73.2	78.8	76.7	89.2	76.1	80.3	76.9	79.7	79.7	75.9	84.8	83.0	83.7	78.0	71.1	85.3
2 hours	11.0	11.5	14.3	16.5	14.1	10.6	13.7	4.6	11.9	7.6	15.4	10.2	10.2	17.2	12.0	8.5	8.2	7.3	18.4	2.9
3 hours	5.9	7.1	4.1	4.7	7.0	9.1	2.7	4.6	6.0	7.6	4.6	3.4	--	3.5	2.2	2.1	--	4.9	7.9	2.9
4 hours	2.5	2.7	4.1	2.4	2.8	--	1.4	--	1.5	1.5	1.5	5.1	5.1	1.7	--	4.3	6.1	7.3	2.6	2.9
5 hours	--	0.9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.4	--	--
6 hours	1.7	0.9	1.0	--	--	--	1.4	--	3.0	--	--	--	1.7	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.9
7 hours	--	1.8	1.0	2.4	2.8	--	1.4	--	--	--	--	1.7	3.4	1.7	--	--	2.0	--	--	--
8 hours	0.9	0.9	--	--	--	--	--	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	--	--	--	--	2.1	--	--	--	2.9
9 hours	--	0.9	--	1.2	--	1.5	2.7	--	--	1.5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nos reporting private study	118	113	98	85	71	66	73	65	67	66	65	59	59	58	46	47	49	41	38	34

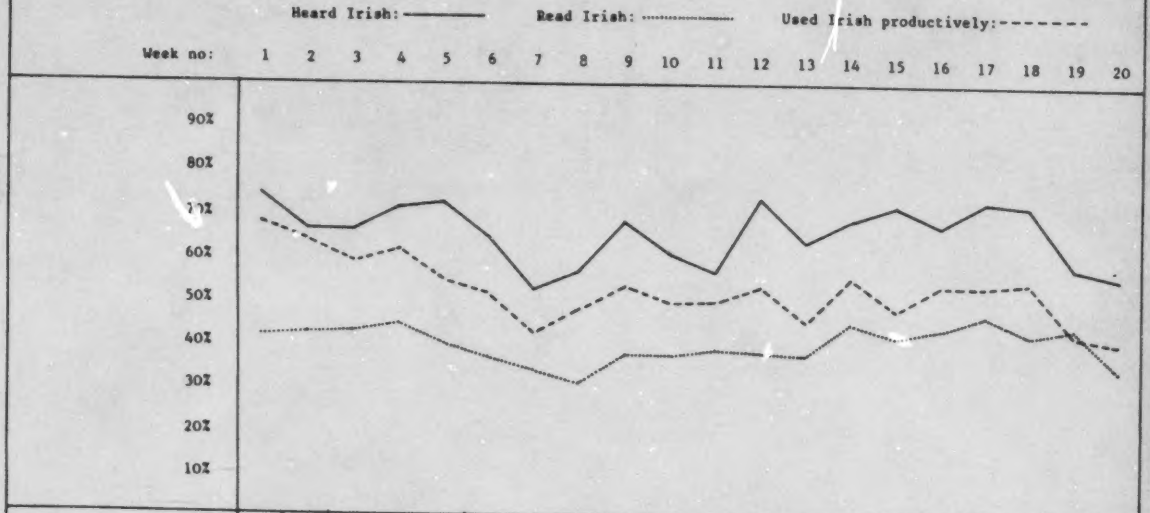
non-course-related private study; overall, reports of course-related private study outweighed reports of non-course-related private study in the ratio 5:2 (Table 75).

The great majority of respondents who reported that they had done some private study each week claimed no more than one hour: perhaps enough to cover the course book lesson. The percentages of respondents claiming more than one hour of private study each week are mostly quite small but by no means negligible (Table 76).

2.1.4 Respondents' week-by-week contact with and use of Irish other than in the context of Anois is Arís

Table 77 shows the percentages of respondents in each week who reported that they had heard Irish, read Irish, and used Irish productively other than in the context of Anois is Arís. Hearing Irish was reported proportionately more frequently than using Irish productively, and (except in the penultimate week of the course) using Irish productively was reported proportionately more frequently than reading Irish. No doubt the fluctuations from week to week were partly determined by the ebb and flow of opportunities to hear Irish, read Irish, and use Irish productively, but for all three activities there are clear downward trends through the period immediately before and after the Christmas break and again at the end of the course. This does not augur well for the degree to which respondents would use and deliberately expose themselves to Irish once the stimulus and support of a regular programme of learning had been removed.

TABLE 77 Percentages of each week's respondents who reported that they had heard Irish, read Irish, and used Irish productively other than in the context of Anois is Aris



Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
% who had heard Irish	74.7	66.7	66.4	71.6	72.6	65.0	52.8	57.0	68.4	61.1	56.7	73.8	63.8	68.9	72.3	67.2	73.1	71.9	57.9	55.3
% who had read Irish	42.0	42.7	42.8	44.8	40.2	37.0	34.0	31.2	37.9	37.8	38.9	38.1	37.5	44.6	41.5	43.3	46.3	42.1	43.9	34.0
% who had used Irish productively	67.9	64.0	59.5	62.1	54.9	52.0	42.5	48.4	53.7	50.0	50.0	53.6	45.0	55.4	47.7	53.7	53.7	54.4	42.1	40.4
Nos of respondents	162	150	131	116	102	100	106	93	95	90	90	84	80	74	65	67	67	57	57	47

2.1.5 Respondents' week-by-week rating of their enthusiasm for learning Irish

Table 78 shows the percentages of each week's respondents who rated their enthusiasm for learning Irish in that week "very low", "low", "average", "high", and "very high". Given that the majority of respondents each week reported that they had actually been learning Irish (see above, 2.1.2, Table 71), it is not surprising that the "very low" and "low" categories together account for less than 10% of respondents in all but four weeks (units 5, 7, 8, 20), whereas the "high" and "very high" categories together account for less than 50% of respondents in only two weeks (units 7 and 20) and for more than 60% in seven weeks (units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 14).

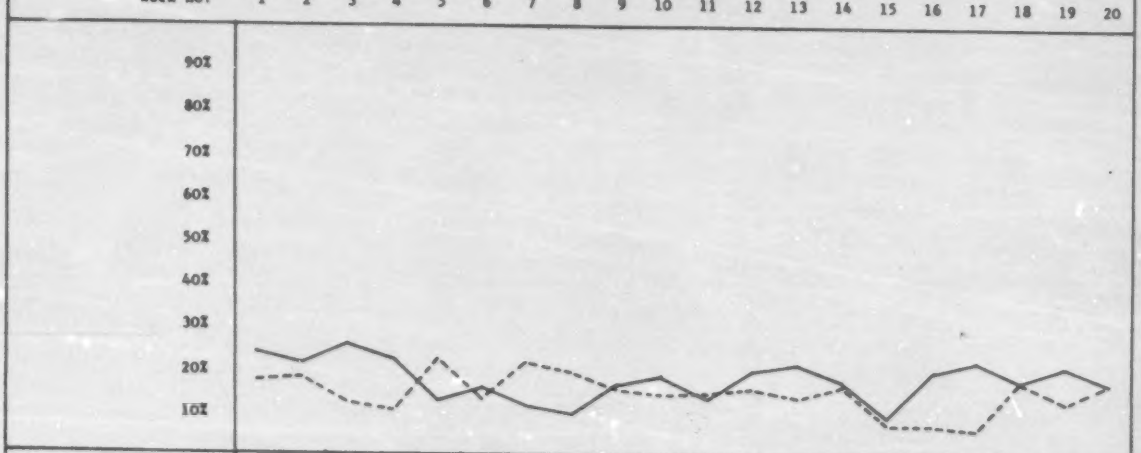
Table 79 shows the percentages of respondents each week who reported factors extraneous to the course that had favourably or unfavourably affected their enthusiasm for learning Irish. Reports of unfavourable factors outweighed reports of favourable factors for units 5, 7, 8, 11; reports of unfavourable factors were at the same level as reports of favourable factors for units 18 and 20; for the remaining fourteen units reports of favourable factors outweighed reports of unfavourable factors.

One notes that those weeks (5, 7, 8) in which the reports of unfavourable extraneous factors outweighed reports of favourable extraneous factors by around 10% (9.8%, 10.4% and 9.7% respectively) coincide with three of the four weeks in which more than 10% of respondents (10.7%, 13.2% and 15.0% respectively) reported their enthusiasm for learning Irish as "very low" or "low". Clearly, one must take seriously the possibility that the relatively higher levels of unenthusiastic responses in weeks 5, 7 and 8 were influenced less by reactions to the course than by outside factors. The picture is much less clear as regards weeks in which there was an especially high level of enthusiastic responses, but it is nevertheless the case that in five of these six weeks (1, 2, 3, 4, 12, 14) reports of favourable extraneous factors predominated over reports of unfavourable extraneous factors (by, respectively, 6.8%, 3.3%, 13.8%, 12.1%, 4.7% and 1.4%).

TABLE 78 Percentages of each week's respondents giving different ratings to their enthusiasm for learning Irish

Rating \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Very low	1.2	1.3	3.1	2.6	2.9	4.0	3.8	3.2	1.1	--	--	--	1.3	2.7	--	--	1.5	--	1.8	4.3
Low	1.9	4.0	5.3	4.3	7.8	5.0	9.4	11.8	6.3	6.7	3.3	2.4	2.5	2.7	9.2	4.5	6.0	8.8	5.3	12.8
Average	17.3	24.0	19.8	28.5	22.6	26.0	33.0	29.0	32.6	40.0	32.2	28.6	38.8	25.7	33.8	34.3	29.9	31.6	29.8	29.8
High	43.8	38.0	42.7	42.2	46.1	39.0	33.0	35.5	36.8	34.4	38.9	45.2	35.0	37.8	35.4	40.3	31.3	35.1	31.6	23.4
Very high	35.8	32.0	29.0	21.6	18.6	20.0	16.0	17.2	20.0	17.8	16.7	21.4	21.3	25.7	18.5	17.9	28.4	22.8	26.3	25.5
No response	--	0.7	--	0.9	2.0	6.0	4.7	3.2	3.2	1.1	8.9	2.4	1.3	5.4	3.1	3.0	3.0	1.8	5.3	4.3
Nos of respondents	162	150	131	116	102	100	106	93	95	90	90	84	80	74	65	67	67	57	57	47

TABLE 79 Percentages of respondents reporting extraneous factors that affected their enthusiasm for learning Irish FAVOURABLY and UNFAVOURABLY



Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
% reporting favourable factors	24.1	21.3	26.0	22.4	12.8	16.0	11.3	9.7	16.8	18.9	13.3	20.2	21.3	17.6	9.2	19.4	22.4	17.5	21.1	17.0
% reporting unfavourable factors	17.3	18.0	12.2	10.3	22.6	13.0	21.7	19.4	15.8	14.4	14.4	15.5	13.8	16.2	7.7	7.5	6.0	17.5	12.3	17.0
Nos of respondents	162	150	131	116	102	100	106	93	95	90	90	84	80	74	65	67	67	57	57	47

2.2 Participants' general reactions to Anois is Arís

In subsections 2.2.1 and 2.2.3-6 the twentieth unit of the course is not taken into account. The reason for this is that relative to certain aspects of unit 20 the replies of some respondents referred not just to that unit but to the course as a whole, and were thus of a different order from the unit-specific replies elicited in other weeks.

2.2.1 What course participants most enjoyed about different course units

As Table 80 shows, a consistently high proportion of course participants did not offer any general comment on their enjoyment of individual course units. The overwhelming majority of those participants who did offer information consistently reported having especially enjoyed the television programme more than any other component of the course. As far as the details of the course are concerned, once again one notes (Table 81) that a steadily significant proportion of participants did not mention any specific feature which they had especially enjoyed in relation to particular course units. The way in which the course was presented and laid out was consistently specified as especially appreciated more often than any other feature - in respect of all units except unit 5 it was specified by the great majority of participants who provided information under this head. If one correlates the data presented in Tables 80 and 81 one finds a strong link between the most prominent items in those tables; the majority of subjects who reported that they had most enjoyed the television programme in any given week stated that it was the presentation of the programme that they had particularly enjoyed (unit 1 - 66.0%, unit 2 - 70.6%, unit 3 - 87.8%, unit 4 - 82.1%, unit 5 - 85.0%, unit 6 - 89.3%, unit 7 - 85.7%, unit 8 - 100.0%, unit 9 - 92.3%, unit 10 - 81.0%, unit 11 - 90.5%, unit 12 - 58.1%, unit 13 - 88.6%, unit 14 - 75.0%, unit 15 - 96.3%, unit 16 - 87.5%, unit 17 - 89.5%, unit 18 - 100.0%, unit 19 - 61.5%).

TABLE 80 Percentages of each week's course participants reporting what they had most enjoyed in general about that week's unit

Aspects of unit \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Television	37.3	26.0	32.8	27.5	23.2	33.3	23.5	22.3	15.9	25.9	28.6	42.8	46.7	37.7	43.0	39.0	33.8	21.4	26.4
Course book	1.2	1.4	0.8	2.7	2.1	5.7	3.1	--	1.1	3.5	--	1.3	6.5	--	1.5	6.2	3.1	3.6	--
Radio	3.1	1.4	3.9	4.6	4.2	2.3	2.0	3.5	5.7	2.3	3.9	2.6	1.3	--	3.1	1.6	3.1	3.6	9.4
Class	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.2	1.3	--	--	2.9	1.5	--	--	--	1.9
Support group	--	0.7	--	--	--	--	--	1.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Some personal factor	4.3	--	0.8	--	--	8.0	3.1	2.3	5.7	1.2	5.2	6.5	2.6	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.5	5.4	7.5
Nothing	1.2	0.7	2.3	2.7	4.2	2.3	3.1	2.3	--	4.7	3.9	--	3.9	1.4	1.5	1.6	--	1.8	1.9
Everything	1.2	0.7	3.1	4.6	--	1.1	3.1	2.3	4.5	2.3	6.5	10.4	3.9	2.9	9.2	6.2	--	8.9	3.8
Two or more positive factors	7.4	4.1	3.9	2.7	1.0	3.4	7.1	5.9	5.7	4.7	2.6	5.2	3.9	4.3	6.1	6.2	3.1	5.4	1.9
No response	44.1	65.1	52.3	55.0	65.3	43.7	55.1	60.0	61.4	54.1	48.0	31.2	31.2	49.2	32.3	37.5	55.3	50.0	47.2
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53

TABLE 81 Percentages of each week's course participants reporting what they had most enjoyed in particular about that week's unit

Features of unit \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Presentation/lay-out/format	45.3	52.7	47.7	56.0	27.4	42.5	27.5	29.4	39.8	48.2	46.7	35.1	50.6	43.5	52.3	53.1	43.1	42.9	39.6
Subject matter/topic(s)	5.6	6.8	4.7	4.6	25.3	8.0	15.3	12.9	--	2.3	6.5	7.8	2.6	14.5	1.5	--	10.8	--	7.5
Grammatical content	1.2	--	0.8	0.9	--	1.1	2.0	--	4.5	7.1	2.6	5.2	1.3	1.4	--	--	--	--	1.9
Phonetic content	2.5	1.4	--	1.8	--	2.3	2.0	1.2	2.3	2.3	1.3	1.3	--	--	3.1	1.6	--	1.8	--
Attitude/tone/atmosphere	17.4	5.5	7.8	3.7	3.2	6.9	2.0	--	3.4	1.2	2.6	5.2	1.3	1.4	4.6	4.7	1.5	--	1.9
Personal sense of achievement	6.2	6.8	8.6	6.4	4.2	6.9	1.0	3.5	10.2	3.5	10.4	9.1	5.2	7.2	1.5	6.2	1.5	12.5	15.1
Activation/clarification/fixing of existing knowledge	1.2	0.7	--	--	1.0	3.4	--	--	--	2.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Usefulness of content	0.6	1.4	3.1	3.7	--	--	--	--	--	1.2	1.3	6.5	2.6	--	1.5	4.7	--	1.8	1.9
Two or more positive factors	5.0	1.4	1.6	--	8.4	1.1	6.1	7.1	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	--	--	4.6	1.8	--
No response	19.9	23.3	25.8	22.9	30.5	27.6	43.9	45.9	38.6	30.6	27.3	28.6	35.1	30.4	35.4	29.7	38.5	39.3	32.1
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53

2.2.2 Course participants' rating of the course book and the television and radio programmes

To arrive at a general impression of course participants' reactions to the course book and the television and radio programmes, the following procedure was adopted. Every week participants were asked (see question 13 of the journal-questionnaire, Appendix B) to rate the course book lesson, the television programme, and the radio programme on a ten-point scale, giving each component a separate score out of ten in respect of each of six criteria:

(i) contribution to participants' understanding of Irish;

(ii) interest;

(iii) usefulness in helping participants to speak Irish;

(iv) enjoyment generated;

(v) contribution to participants' enthusiasm for learning Irish;

(vi) contribution to increasing participants' interest in Irish culture, traditions, etc.

From the scores elicited by these different criteria a single average range of scores was then calculated for each component in respect of each week of the course. These average scores are presented in Tables 82, 83 and 84.

It will be clear from these tables that the non-response rate here was generally quite low and that the great majority of course participants availing themselves of particular components in particular weeks used the upper half of the scale when evaluating these components. In terms both of the band of the scale within which most responses were concentrated and the particular points on the scale which attracted the highest numbers of responses, the television programmes were on the whole slightly more highly rated than the radio programmes, which in turn were slightly more highly rated than the course book.

With regard to variation resulting from the application of the different criteria, this was more marked in the case of the radio programmes than in the case of the television programmes and the course book. For example, irrespective of the criterion applied, the single most frequently elicited score overall for the television programmes was ten and for the course book eight, whereas the single most frequently elicited score overall for the radio programmes vacillated between eight (in respect of criteria i, ii and iv) and ten (in respect of criteria iii, v and vi). The average ratings for all three components were depressed by relatively high proportions of very low scores in respect of

TABLE 82 Percentages of each week's course participants giving different average ratings to the television programme on a 10-point scale (where 10 = most positive reaction)

Rating \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1 (least positive)	1.3	2.3	1.8	5.1	2.4	2.7	5.9	4.5	2.7	4.3	3.2	3.1	3.1	--	1.8	2.0	3.6	2.5	2.6	6.4
2	3.4	0.8	4.5	4.1	4.8	4.0	2.4	3.0	6.7	1.4	6.4	1.6	3.1	6.9	1.8	--	--	2.5	5.1	--
3	4.7	3.8	5.4	3.1	2.4	5.3	4.8	7.6	2.7	5.7	--	4.7	--	1.7	1.8	--	3.6	--	2.6	--
4	2.7	3.1	3.6	4.1	6.0	9.3	4.8	--	5.3	4.3	4.8	4.7	3.1	1.7	5.4	8.0	1.8	2.5	2.6	3.2
5	4.0	8.5	8.2	6.1	3.6	5.3	9.5	6.1	4.0	15.7	12.9	9.4	9.4	6.9	7.3	14.0	7.3	7.5	5.1	--
6	11.4	9.2	10.0	10.2	4.8	14.7	8.3	12.1	18.7	10.0	19.3	10.9	17.2	19.0	23.6	18.0	14.5	20.0	15.4	12.9
7	15.4	15.4	19.1	20.4	14.5	5.3	19.0	18.2	17.3	14.3	14.5	15.6	10.9	20.7	16.4	12.0	20.0	7.5	15.4	16.1
8	22.1	23.8	16.4	16.3	25.3	21.3	17.9	19.7	12.0	15.7	11.3	25.0	35.9	22.4	23.6	26.0	18.2	27.5	28.2	29.0
9	21.5	17.7	20.9	20.4	14.5	14.7	13.1	16.7	16.0	20.0	16.1	15.6	7.8	13.8	7.3	8.0	18.2	12.5	5.1	12.9
10 (most positive)	10.1	13.8	10.0	10.2	13.2	10.7	2.4	6.1	5.3	7.1	11.3	9.4	9.4	5.2	9.1	10.0	12.7	12.5	15.4	9.7
No response	3.4	1.5	--	--	8.4	6.7	11.9	6.1	9.3	1.4	--	--	--	1.7	1.8	2.0	--	5.0	2.6	9.7
Nos of participants who watched TV programmes	149	130	110	98	83	75	84	66	75	70	62	64	64	58	55	50	55	40	39	31

TABLE 83 Percentages of each week's course participants giving different average ratings to the course book on a 10-point scale (where 10 = most positive reaction)

Rating \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1 (least positive)	1.3	3.6	3.3	3.8	2.2	3.9	2.4	2.4	2.4	1.3	1.4	2.7	2.9	--	3.2	--	3.2	3.7	2.0	--
2	0.6	0.7	2.5	1.9	1.1	1.3	2.4	2.4	--	--	--	1.3	1.4	3.2	1.6	3.4	--	5.5	--	2.4
3	3.8	5.8	4.9	3.8	5.6	3.9	2.4	2.4	6.0	5.2	2.7	5.4	4.3	1.6	--	1.7	--	--	2.0	--
4	6.4	7.2	7.4	7.7	6.7	7.9	4.8	7.1	4.8	11.7	9.6	2.7	7.2	7.9	9.5	8.6	4.8	7.4	7.8	--
5	6.4	10.9	9.0	14.4	11.2	9.2	11.9	7.1	10.8	11.7	11.0	13.5	13.0	15.9	20.6	15.5	12.9	13.0	5.9	19.0
6	16.6	19.6	16.4	14.4	14.6	21.0	22.6	20.2	22.9	15.6	20.5	20.3	23.2	23.8	28.6	22.4	19.3	20.4	21.6	23.8
7	21.0	15.9	24.6	16.3	22.5	22.4	20.2	23.8	19.3	15.6	21.9	21.6	17.4	23.8	9.5	19.0	22.6	16.7	31.4	11.9
8	19.1	15.9	12.3	17.3	13.5	14.5	13.1	16.7	19.3	22.1	16.4	16.2	17.4	7.9	11.1	13.8	9.7	14.8	3.9	7.1
9	15.3	6.5	6.6	11.5	9.0	6.6	8.3	7.1	3.6	10.4	11.0	8.1	7.2	7.9	7.9	8.6	9.7	7.4	7.8	7.1
10 (most positive)	3.2	7.2	4.9	4.8	5.6	6.6	1.2	2.4	1.2	2.6	5.5	4.0	5.8	7.9	7.9	6.9	11.3	7.4	11.8	7.1
No response	6.4	6.5	8.2	3.8	7.9	2.6	10.7	8.3	9.6	3.9	--	4.0	--	--	--	--	6.4	3.7	5.9	21.4
Nos of participants who used course book	157	138	122	104	89	76	84	84	83	77	73	74	69	63	63	58	62	54	51	42

TABLE 84 Percentages of each week's course participants giving different average ratings to the radio programme on a 10-point scale (where 10 = most positive reaction)

Rating \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1 (least positive)	2.3	6.7	1.5	3.1	--	--	4.4	--	2.4	--	--	--	--	2.9	--	--	3.0	--	--	--
2	4.5	--	1.5	3.1	2.0	--	4.4	5.5	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.9	--	--	--	--	--
3	4.5	8.0	6.0	--	4.0	8.6	2.2	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.1	--	--	--	--	2.6	--	--	--	5.3
4	11.4	13.3	6.0	4.7	12.0	8.6	13.3	8.3	4.8	7.3	2.1	5.3	9.3	5.7	2.9	7.7	3.0	7.7	10.0	--
5	5.7	4.0	7.5	7.8	6.0	5.7	6.7	11.1	14.3	9.8	2.1	7.9	--	5.7	14.3	5.1	6.1	7.7	3.3	5.3
6	13.6	10.7	11.9	18.7	12.0	17.1	17.8	22.2	11.9	19.5	23.4	10.5	16.3	25.7	14.3	17.9	18.2	23.1	16.7	15.8
7	13.6	20.0	31.3	21.9	26.0	20.0	22.2	16.7	26.2	24.4	27.7	31.6	25.6	28.6	22.9	20.5	21.2	30.8	26.7	36.8
8	21.6	18.7	17.9	14.1	16.0	20.0	11.1	13.9	19.0	17.1	12.8	21.0	18.6	14.3	11.4	12.8	15.1	7.7	13.3	10.5
9	10.2	9.3	10.4	12.5	10.0	8.6	13.3	11.1	11.9	14.6	14.9	10.5	11.6	8.6	11.4	15.4	18.2	11.5	6.7	--
10 (most positive)	5.7	6.7	4.5	4.7	10.0	11.4	4.4	8.3	4.8	4.9	6.4	10.5	7.0	8.6	8.6	5.1	9.1	11.5	16.7	5.3
No response	6.8	2.7	1.5	9.6	2.0	--	--	--	2.4	--	8.5	2.6	11.6	--	11.4	12.8	6.1	--	6.7	21.0
Numbers of participants who listened to radio	88	75	67	64	50	35	45	36	42	41	47	38	43	35	35	39	33	26	30	19

criterion vi. This should be compared with the data from the pre-course questionnaire, which at various points showed the cultural/patriotic dimension to be a significant factor in volunteers' past enjoyment of and present interest in learning Irish (see above, 1.2.2, Tables 37 and 38; 1.3.1, Tables 51 and 52).

2.2.3 What course participants found most helpful about the various course components

Table 85 shows that the question requiring participants to indicate what they had found most helpful about the television programmes failed to provoke a response from a considerable proportion of participants who had watched the programme in any particular week; this proportion ranged from just under a fifth to rather more than two fifths. Of the factors that were mentioned by participants who did respond, the way in which the programmes were presented was the most frequently referred to for all units except 5, 8 and 14. This very positive response to the television presentation echoes the findings with regard to what participants found most enjoyable about the course (see above, 2.2.1). In those weeks (5, 8 and 14) when presentation was not the most frequently mentioned factor, the single most frequently mentioned factor was the sketches and/or conversations in the programmes.

Of participants who had used the course book in particular weeks a proportion ranging from just over a sixth to just under two fifths failed to express a view about the useful aspects of the book (Table 86). Individual factors that were relatively frequently mentioned by participants who did respond were presentation and/or lay-out (most frequently mentioned of all factors in respect of units 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 18 and 19, and jointly most frequently mentioned factor in respect of unit 3); the explanations provided in the book (most frequently mentioned of all factors in respect of weeks 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17, and jointly most frequently mentioned factor in respect of units 3 and 5); and the dialogues contained in the course book (jointly most frequently mentioned of all factors in respect of unit 5).

Among participants who had listened to the radio programmes in particular weeks the non-response rate on the question of the usefulness of these programmes was similar in range to that recorded in respect of the usefulness of the television programmes (Table 87). Presentation was once again prominent in those responses that were forthcoming (most frequently mentioned of all factors in respect of units 2, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18 and 19, and jointly most frequently mentioned factor in respect of weeks 6 and 11). Other relatively frequently mentioned factors were the explanations that figured in the programmes (most frequently mentioned of all factors in respect of weeks 14 and 17, and jointly most frequently mentioned factor in respect of weeks 6 and 11), and the relation of the radio programmes to other course components (mentioned more frequently

TABLE 85 Percentages of each week's course participants finding different elements of the television programme most helpful

Elements of TV programmes \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Presentation	30.2	33.8	52.7	53.1	18.1	25.3	20.2	13.6	34.7	37.1	30.6	31.2	31.2	27.6	40.0	46.0	47.3	57.5	46.1
Sketches/conversations	22.1	28.5	2.7	10.2	20.5	4.0	8.3	16.7	5.3	15.7	14.5	14.1	14.1	32.8	5.4	10.0	5.4	--	2.6
Explanations	5.4	2.3	4.5	4.1	12.0	12.0	9.5	12.1	8.0	7.1	19.3	20.3	7.8	6.9	5.4	6.0	1.8	5.0	5.1
Relation to other course components	--	0.8	0.9	--	--	--	--	1.5	1.3	1.4	--	--	1.6	--	1.8	--	1.8	--	--
Listening practice	10.7	2.3	1.8	--	2.4	10.7	8.3	--	2.7	2.9	3.2	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.8	4.0	3.6	--	7.7
Some personal factor	3.4	1.5	--	--	1.2	1.3	--	1.5	--	--	--	--	1.6	--	1.8	--	--	--	--
Clarity of diction	5.3	3.8	2.7	3.1	7.2	5.3	3.6	6.1	2.7	1.4	1.6	1.6	4.7	1.7	3.6	6.0	5.4	5.0	--
Other	0.7	3.8	2.7	2.0	9.6	1.3	3.6	9.1	--	--	--	--	1.6	--	--	--	1.8	--	--
Particularly interesting comment	2.7	--	0.9	1.0	1.2	5.3	--	--	1.3	--	1.6	1.6	--	1.7	--	--	--	--	2.6
No response	19.5	23.1	30.9	26.5	27.7	34.7	46.4	39.3	44.0	34.3	29.0	29.7	35.9	27.6	40.0	28.0	32.7	32.5	35.9
Nos of participants who watched TV programmes	149	130	110	98	83	75	84	66	75	70	62	64	64	58	55	50	55	40	39

TABLE 86 Percentages of each week's course participants finding different elements of the course book most helpful

Elements of course book \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Presentation/lay-out	26.7	24.6	20.5	26.9	15.7	10.5	11.9	9.5	19.3	22.1	24.7	12.2	18.8	12.7	15.9	31.0	21.0	25.9	35.3
Dialogues	13.4	9.4	8.2	9.6	16.8	7.9	5.9	10.7	12.0	11.7	13.7	6.8	13.0	17.5	11.1	19.0	6.4	13.0	15.7
Explanations	12.1	7.2	20.5	11.5	16.8	19.7	15.5	13.1	15.7	18.2	17.8	35.1	23.2	25.4	23.8	17.2	24.2	18.5	11.8
Relation to other course components	14.0	13.0	9.8	9.6	3.4	10.5	5.9	8.3	12.0	9.1	6.8	4.0	8.7	7.9	9.5	1.7	6.4	9.3	5.9
Reading practice	8.3	2.9	5.7	2.9	4.5	13.2	4.8	1.2	4.8	5.2	5.5	1.3	1.4	4.8	--	--	3.2	1.8	--
Some personal factor	1.9	2.2	0.8	1.9	--	--	1.2	2.4	--	1.3	2.7	1.3	--	--	--	--	1.6	--	--
General clarity	0.6	0.7	0.8	1.9	1.1	3.9	1.2	2.4	--	2.6	--	--	--	--	1.6	--	1.6	--	--
Other	3.8	2.9	1.6	1.9	9.0	5.3	13.1	15.5	--	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.9	1.6	--	--	3.2	--	--
Particularly interesting comment	1.3	0.7	--	--	1.1	3.9	1.2	--	--	--	1.4	1.3	--	1.6	--	--	--	--	--
No response	17.8	36.2	32.0	33.6	31.5	25.0	39.3	36.9	36.1	27.3	24.7	35.1	31.9	28.6	38.1	31.0	32.2	31.5	31.4
Nos of participants who used course book	157	138	122	104	89	76	84	84	83	77	73	74	69	63	63	58	62	54	51

TABLE 87 Percentages of each week's course participants finding different elements of the radio programme most helpful

Elements of radio programme / Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Presentation	7.9	14.7	13.4	20.3	4.0	17.1	8.9	11.1	38.1	29.3	17.0	28.9	25.6	11.4	28.6	35.9	12.1	34.6	30.0
Sketches/conversations	9.1	8.0	7.5	6.2	4.0	2.9	2.2	--	2.4	4.9	6.4	5.3	9.3	11.4	2.9	2.6	6.1	3.8	6.7
Explanations	7.9	9.3	8.9	6.2	12.0	17.1	11.1	13.9	11.9	4.9	17.0	15.8	11.6	22.9	5.7	12.8	15.1	7.7	--
Relation to other course components	13.6	13.3	14.9	9.4	8.0	11.4	11.1	8.3	9.5	9.8	12.8	5.3	7.0	2.9	2.9	--	12.1	3.8	6.7
Listening practice	11.4	5.3	3.0	1.6	6.0	11.4	2.2	2.8	4.8	9.8	2.1	2.6	9.3	8.6	--	5.1	--	--	3.3
Some personal factor	2.3	2.7	--	3.1	--	--	2.2	2.8	--	2.4	2.1	2.6	--	--	--	--	9.1	--	--
Clarity of diction	6.8	4.0	13.4	7.8	2.0	--	4.4	11.1	2.4	19.5	4.2	7.9	4.6	5.7	2.9	5.1	3.0	19.2	6.7
Other	4.5	4.0	1.5	6.2	20.0	2.9	20.0	22.2	--	--	--	2.6	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Particularly interesting comment	6.8	--	4.5	4.7	--	2.9	--	--	2.4	--	6.4	2.6	2.3	8.6	--	--	3.0	--	3.3
No response	29.5	38.7	32.8	34.4	44.0	34.3	37.8	27.8	28.6	19.5	31.9	26.3	30.2	28.6	57.1	38.5	39.4	30.8	43.3
Nos of participants who listened to radio	88	75	67	64	50	35	45	36	42	41	47	38	43	35	35	39	33	26	30

TABLE 88 Percentages of each week's course participants finding different elements of that week's course-related activities most helpful

Elements of course-related activities / Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Presentation	1.2	1.7	--	--	4.0	4.2	--	--	--	--	3.7	--	4.5	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sketches/conversations	10.0	--	10.4	--	--	16.7	--	--	--	14.3	14.8	9.1	4.5	25.0	14.3	25.0	10.5	8.3	7.7
Explanations	--	--	2.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	3.6	3.7	4.5	--	--	--	--	5.3	8.3	--
Relation to other course components	1.2	6.7	18.7	4.8	4.0	8.3	4.3	--	8.7	14.3	3.7	18.2	9.1	--	19.0	18.7	5.3	16.7	--
Listening/reading practice	7.5	6.7	6.2	--	4.0	--	--	--	--	--	7.4	4.5	4.5	5.0	--	--	--	8.3	7.7
Some personal factor	7.5	5.0	2.1	4.8	--	12.5	--	--	--	--	--	9.1	4.5	5.0	4.8	6.2	10.5	--	--
General clarity	--	--	2.1	--	--	--	--	4.0	4.3	--	3.7	--	--	--	--	--	--	8.3	--
Other	38.7	40.0	31.2	57.1	68.0	25.0	73.9	32.0	60.9	28.6	37.0	18.2	36.4	20.0	23.8	50.0	15.8	41.7	61.5
Particularly interesting comment	--	--	--	2.4	--	8.3	--	4.0	--	3.6	7.4	4.5	4.5	10.0	--	--	5.3	8.3	--
No response	33.7	40.0	27.1	30.9	20.0	25.0	21.7	60.0	26.1	35.7	18.5	31.8	31.8	35.0	38.1	--	47.4	--	23.1
Nos of participants who engaged in course-related activities	80	60	48	42	25	24	23	25	23	28	27	22	22	20	21	16	19	12	13

than any other factor in respect of units 1 and 3).

Among course participants who had engaged in other course-related activities the non-response rate as far as the usefulness of such activities was concerned had a much broader range (0.0% - 60.0%) than that noted in relation to the usefulness of the television and radio programmes and the book (Table 88). Of the responses that were forthcoming a majority overall referred to factors other than presentation, sketches/ conversations, explanations, relation to other course components, personal factors and general clarity, and did not fall into the category of "particularly interesting comments". Of all categories the "other" category covered most responses in respect of every unit except unit 4 (when it shared the top position with the category referring to the relation of course-related activities to the course package proper) and unit 14; moreover, there was no week in which the "other" category subsumed less than 20% of responses. It transpired that a large proportion of responses coded as "other" made reference to the practice tape associated with the course book, and so it is possible to interpret the above results as a positive reaction to the practice tape. Other factors which were relatively frequently mentioned were the sketches and/or conversations encountered by course participants in their course-related activities (most frequently mentioned of all factors in respect of unit 14); and the relation of such activities to other components of Anois is Arís (jointly most frequently mentioned of all factors in respect of unit 12).

2.2.4 What participants felt they had learned well - and why

As Table 89 shows, relative to any given week a considerable proportion of course participants, though not a majority, did not mention any general aspect of course content they felt they had learned well. On the other hand, in the case of a number of weeks a significant minority of participants claimed to have learned most or all of the content of the course unit well. The general aspect of course content which was reported more often than any other as having been learned well in respect of all weeks except week 12 was the course's notional/functional content. In respect of week 12 the aspect of course content which was more often than any other reported to have been learned well was the unit's grammatical content. Between about a quarter and about a half of course participants in any given week specified a particular learning target that they felt they had mastered (Table 90).

TABLE 89 Percentages of each week's course participants reporting what they had learned well in general from that week's unit

Aspects of course content / Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Sketches, conversations etc.	3.1	4.8	3.9	3.7	3.2	3.4	3.1	5.9	4.5	--	5.2	2.6	6.5	10.1	--	1.6	--	7.1	1.9
Notional/functional content	34.8	50.0	43.7	61.5	51.6	25.3	34.7	37.6	43.2	49.4	40.3	14.3	41.5	46.4	47.7	48.4	60.0	26.8	52.8
Grammatical content	3.1	0.7	8.6	2.7	--	9.2	5.1	7.1	9.1	8.2	11.7	39.0	2.6	4.3	7.7	7.8	1.5	--	5.7
Phonetic content	7.4	4.8	5.5	0.9	4.2	6.9	7.1	3.5	1.1	3.5	2.6	2.6	9.1	1.4	3.1	1.6	1.5	10.7	--
Understanding generally	3.7	--	0.8	0.9	--	4.6	2.0	--	--	2.3	--	1.3	2.6	4.3	--	--	1.5	1.8	--
Producing generally	--	0.7	--	0.9	--	--	1.0	--	--	2.3	--	--	1.3	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nothing	3.1	3.4	2.3	4.6	6.3	1.1	3.1	1.2	5.7	4.7	2.6	--	3.9	--	1.5	--	1.5	3.6	3.8
Most/all	19.9	8.2	10.9	8.3	8.4	16.1	6.1	1.2	6.8	3.5	9.1	11.7	7.8	4.3	6.1	12.5	4.6	17.9	20.7
Two or more positive factors	1.2	0.7	--	--	--	3.4	1.0	4.7	--	--	1.3	1.3	1.3	4.3	--	--	--	--	--
No response	23.6	26.7	24.2	16.5	26.3	29.9	36.7	38.8	29.5	25.9	27.3	27.3	23.4	24.6	33.8	28.1	29.2	32.1	15.1
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53

TABLE 90	Percentages of course participants who mentioned specific learning targets they felt they had learned well in particular weeks (units 1-19)	
Week	No. of course participants	Percentages of course participants mentioning specific learning targets they felt they had learned well
1	161	36.0%
2	146	44.5%
3	128	52.3%
4	109	56.0%
5	95	48.4%
6	87	24.1%
7	98	38.8%
8	85	40.0%
9	88	38.6%
10	85	47.1%
11	77	32.5%
12	77	37.7%
13	77	36.4%
14	69	47.8%
15	65	44.6%
16	64	45.3%
17	65	56.9%
18	56	25.0%
19	53	52.8%

A large majority of course participants did not offer any general explanation (Table 91) for their having learned well whatever they had learned well in any particular week. General factors which were relatively frequently mentioned were factors relating to participants' own personal experience (mentioned more frequently than any other category of factor in respect of units 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18 and 19, and jointly most frequently mentioned factor in respect of units 12 and 13) and the television component of the course (single most frequently mentioned factor in respect of units 1, 3, 4 and 14, and jointly most frequently mentioned factor in respect of units 12 and 13). More particular factors (Table 92) were again mentioned by less than 50% of course participants except in relation to units 1, 2 and 17. Particular factors which were relatively frequently mentioned were the repetition and/or exercises contained within the course units (single most frequently mentioned factor in respect of units 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15 and 18), clarity of exposition (single most frequently mentioned factor in respect of weeks 4, 11, 12, 13, 17 and 19, and jointly most frequently

TABLE 91 Percentages of each week's course participants reporting why in general they had learned well whatever they felt they had learned well from that week's unit

Reasons for learning well / Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Television	13.7	8.2	14.1	8.3	3.2	6.9	4.1	7.1	--	7.1	7.8	13.0	9.1	8.7	1.5	1.6	3.1	1.8	5.7
Course book	3.7	1.4	2.3	3.7	1.0	3.4	4.1	1.2	4.5	1.2	5.2	3.9	5.2	1.4	1.5	4.7	3.1	3.6	7.5
Radio	0.6	0.7	--	--	5.3	1.1	--	2.3	1.1	--	5.2	--	2.6	1.4	3.1	--	7.7	3.6	--
Class	--	--	--	--	--	1.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.4	--	--	--	--	--
Support group	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Some personal factor	6.2	10.3	8.6	7.3	17.9	3.4	13.3	16.5	6.8	15.3	10.4	13.0	9.1	7.2	4.6	9.4	3.1	16.1	9.4
Subject matter	4.3	2.0	--	--	--	3.4	--	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Other	0.6	1.4	--	--	--	2.3	1.0	--	1.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Two or more positive factors	3.1	4.1	5.5	4.6	2.1	--	5.1	1.2	4.5	1.2	3.9	--	3.9	4.3	3.1	4.7	3.1	1.8	5.7
No response	67.7	71.9	69.5	72.6	70.5	78.2	72.4	70.6	80.7	74.1	66.2	68.8	70.1	75.4	86.1	79.7	80.0	73.2	71.7
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53

TABLE 92 Percentages of each week's course participants reporting why in particular they had learned well whatever they felt they had learned well from that week's unit

Reasons for learning well \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Presentation/lay-out	11.2	6.8	5.5	8.3	5.3	1.1	7.1	4.7	1.1	2.3	5.2	5.2	2.6	4.3	1.5	3.1	4.6	3.6	7.5
Simplicity	5.0	3.4	2.3	--	2.1	3.4	1.0	--	4.5	2.3	--	2.6	3.9	1.4	4.6	1.6	7.7	--	3.8
Clarity	7.4	8.2	9.4	12.8	6.3	8.0	2.0	4.7	9.1	10.6	15.6	18.2	15.6	11.6	9.2	4.7	20.0	8.9	15.1
Repetition/exercise(s)	18.0	20.5	18.0	6.4	15.8	13.8	9.2	10.6	12.5	8.2	10.4	3.9	10.4	13.0	13.8	6.2	7.7	10.7	5.7
Past experience/knowledge	13.0	8.9	6.2	10.1	8.4	8.0	12.2	8.2	6.8	10.6	11.7	2.6	5.2	7.2	4.6	7.8	10.8	3.6	3.8
Usefulness	1.9	6.2	0.8	0.9	5.3	3.4	--	2.3	4.5	3.5	2.6	2.6	--	4.3	1.5	3.1	1.5	--	--
Interest	1.2	--	2.3	--	--	1.1	--	1.2	--	1.2	--	1.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.9
Enjoyment	1.2	2.0	--	1.8	1.0	--	--	--	3.4	--	--	1.3	2.6	--	--	--	1.5	1.8	--
Two or more factors	1.9	1.4	--	--	2.1	--	2.0	3.5	--	--	--	--	--	1.4	--	--	--	--	--
No response	39.1	42.5	55.5	59.6	53.7	60.9	66.3	64.7	57.9	61.2	54.5	62.3	59.7	56.5	64.6	73.4	46.1	71.4	62.3
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53

mentioned factor in respect of week 10), and participants' past experience and/or knowledge (single most frequently mentioned factor in respect of weeks 7 and 16, and jointly most frequently mentioned factor in respect of week 10).

2.2.5 What course participants found most difficult - and why

As Table 93 shows, a fair proportion of course participants did not offer any comment on general areas of difficulty associated with individual course units. Moreover, in a very considerable number of cases the comment offered consisted of a statement to the effect that no difficulties had been encountered; this response was elicited more often than any other in respect of units 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16 and 18. Of the problem areas that were mentioned, the notional/functional content of course units was referred to more frequently than any other in respect of all units except 3, 10, 12 and 16. Another relatively frequently mentioned difficulty area was grammar (more frequently mentioned than any other problem area in respect of units 3, 10, 12, and 16). For any given week a lower percentage of course participants specified particular learning targets which they had found especially difficult (Table 94) than specified particular learning targets they felt they had learned well (Table 90).

The great majority of course participants in any given week did not record any general explanation for their difficulties (Table 95). Those that did tended to blame their problems on some personal factor rather than on the course; the personal factor was mentioned more frequently than any other factor in respect of all units except 1 and 2, when the television component was the single most frequently mentioned factor. As far as more detailed reasons for difficulties are concerned (Table 96), again only a minority of participants in any one week were prepared to specify such reasons. Most prominent among the particular explanations offered were lack of clarity in presentation and interference from past experience and/or knowledge; the former was the single most frequently mentioned factor in respect of units 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 14, 16, 17 and 18, the latter in respect of units 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 19, and the two factors were jointly most frequently mentioned in respect of units 9, 13 and 15.

TABLE 93 Percentages of each week's course participants reporting what in general they had found difficult in that week's unit

Aspects of course content / Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Sketches, conversations etc.	8.7	12.3	5.5	5.5	2.1	9.2	8.2	2.3	5.7	2.3	6.5	3.9	7.8	5.8	4.6	9.4	3.1	5.4	.8
Notional/functional content	13.7	17.1	7.8	29.4	29.5	11.5	19.4	15.3	14.8	16.5	16.9	9.1	15.6	21.7	18.5	7.8	24.6	14.3	34.0
Grammatical content	5.0	3.4	21.1	7.3	6.3	8.0	5.1	5.9	11.4	22.3	14.3	29.9	3.9	14.5	7.7	10.9	1.5	5.4	3.8
Phonetic content	11.8	9.6	7.8	8.3	8.4	9.2	7.1	11.8	9.1	11.8	7.8	6.5	14.3	4.3	6.1	4.7	4.6	3.6	1.9
Understanding generally	6.2	2.7	2.3	2.7	5.3	4.6	1.0	2.3	--	1.2	3.5	--	--	1.4	--	1.6	1.5	--	1.9
Producing generally	2.5	1.4	--	0.9	--	2.3	1.0	1.2	2.3	--	--	--	--	--	4.6	--	3.1	1.8	--
Nothing	20.5	22.6	16.4	18.3	11.6	5.7	11.2	16.5	18.2	9.4	20.8	18.2	16.9	7.2	18.5	18.7	--	23.2	20.7
Most/all	1.2	0.7	--	1.8	3.2	1.1	2.0	--	2.3	5.9	--	2.6	1.3	1.4	--	--	1.5	1.8	1.9
Two or more aspects	0.6	2.7	1.6	1.8	6.3	1.1	3.1	1.2	--	1.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
No response	29.8	27.4	37.5	23.8	27.4	47.1	41.8	43.5	36.3	20.4	29.9	29.9	40.2	43.5	40.0	46.9	60.0	44.6	32.1
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53

TABLE 94	Percentages of course participants who mentioned particular learning targets they had found especially difficult in particular weeks (units 1-19)	
Week	No. of course participants	Percentages of course participants mentioning specific learning targets they had found especially difficult
1	161	14.9%
2	146	15.1%
3	128	27.3%
4	109	28.4%
5	95	27.4%
6	87	12.6%
7	98	21.4%
8	85	17.6%
9	88	12.5%
10	85	11.8%
11	77	7.8%
12	77	31.2%
13	77	11.7%
14	69	18.8%
15	65	15.4%
16	64	6.2%
17	65	23.1%
18	56	14.3%
19	53	34.0%

TABLE 95 Percentages of each week's course participants reporting why in general they had found difficult whatever they had found difficult in that week's unit

Reasons for difficulties \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Television	17.4	4.8	4.7	3.7	3.2	5.7	6.1	3.5	3.4	3.5	5.2	2.6	3.9	4.3	3.1	1.6	4.6	--	1.9
Course book	1.2	2.0	0.8	1.8	1.0	2.3	--	--	2.3	--	2.6	--	1.3	1.4	1.5	--	--	1.8	--
Radio	1.2	1.4	--	1.8	--	1.1	--	--	--	--	2.6	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Class	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.0	1.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Support group	0.6	--	--	--	--	--	1.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.4	--	--	--	--	--
Some personal factor	3.7	2.7	7.0	10.1	12.6	8.0	10.2	14.1	10.2	12.9	9.1	23.4	10.4	7.2	10.8	4.7	3.1	7.1	11.3
Subject matter	3.1	3.4	0.8	0.9	--	2.3	2.0	3.5	--	--	--	--	--	1.4	--	--	1.5	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.1	--	--	--	--	1.4	--	--	--	--	--
Two or more reasons	2.5	1.4	3.9	3.7	1.0	--	2.0	--	--	1.2	--	--	--	1.4	--	--	6.1	--	1.9
No response	70.2	84.2	82.8	78.0	82.1	80.5	77.5	77.6	82.9	82.3	80.5	74.0	84.4	81.2	84.6	93.7	84.6	91.1	84.9
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53

TABLE 96 Percentages of each week's course participants reporting why in particular they had found difficult whatever they had found difficult in that week's unit

Reasons for difficulties / Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Presentation/lay-out	7.4	5.5	0.8	0.9	4.2	1.1	5.1	1.2	--	1.2	1.3	1.3	--	1.4	--	1.6	1.5	--	--
Complexity	2.5	2.0	2.3	--	2.1	3.4	1.0	--	5.7	1.2	2.6	5.2	3.9	4.3	1.5	4.7	1.5	1.8	5.7
Lack of clarity	19.9	15.7	9.4	11.0	3.2	9.2	3.1	5.9	4.5	5.9	3.9	6.5	3.9	10.1	6.1	6.2	10.8	5.4	3.8
Lack of exercises	6.8	4.8	2.3	1.8	7.4	--	7.1	1.2	2.3	2.3	1.3	--	--	4.3	--	--	6.1	--	3.8
Interference from past experience	8.1	7.5	2.3	9.2	9.5	5.7	10.2	7.1	4.5	8.2	5.2	9.1	3.9	4.3	6.1	--	4.6	1.8	7.5
Learning target not useful	1.2	0.7	--	--	--	2.3	1.0	2.3	1.1	--	--	1.3	1.3	2.9	--	--	--	--	--
Learning target not interesting	--	--	--	--	1.0	1.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.3	--	--	--	--	1.8	--
Learning target not enjoyable to learn	--	--	--	--	--	2.3	--	--	--	2.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.9
Two or more reasons	1.2	2.0	--	0.9	1.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
No response	52.8	61.6	82.8	76.1	71.6	74.7	72.4	82.3	81.8	78.8	85.7	76.6	85.7	72.5	86.1	87.5	75.4	89.3	77.4
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53

2.2.6 What participants felt they needed more help with and/or practice on

A steadily significant minority of course participants in the various weeks of the course volunteered no information on aspects of course content they needed more help with and/or practice on (Table 97). Furthermore, in respect of most units of the course a handful of participants claimed that there was nothing they needed more help with and/or practice on.

Areas which were relatively frequently mentioned by participants who did provide information under this head were grammar and/or orthography (more frequently mentioned than any other area in respect of weeks 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14, and jointly most frequently mentioned in respect of week 3), producing Irish generally (most frequently mentioned of all areas in respect of weeks 2, 4 and 5) and pronunciation (single most frequently mentioned area in respect of week 1). One matter which does not directly relate to course content but which was often mentioned as something participants felt they needed help with was the problem of meeting other people with whom to speak Irish. The fact that this response was elicited more frequently than any other in respect of weeks 13, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19, and jointly most frequently in respect of week 3, serves to underline the need for effective support structures as an integral part of any attempt to encourage the everyday communicative use of Irish.

TABLE 97 Percentages of each week's course participants reporting that they needed more help with/practice on different elements of that week's unit

Elements of course content / Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Notional/functional element(s)	6.2	10.3	3.1	12.8	9.5	9.2	--	2.3	7.9	1.2	3.9	5.2	5.2	8.9	7.7	6.2	6.1	10.7	9.4
Grammar/orthography	9.3	7.5	23.4	10.1	8.4	14.9	28.6	21.2	20.4	24.7	24.7	27.3	13.0	15.9	15.4	12.5	9.2	12.5	7.5
Pronunciation	15.5	11.6	10.9	11.9	4.2	11.5	5.1	8.2	7.9	10.6	3.9	11.7	7.8	2.9	9.2	10.9	4.6	7.1	15.1
Understanding	4.3	3.4	5.5	1.8	4.2	3.4	4.1	1.2	4.5	4.7	1.3	1.3	2.6	1.4	4.6	6.2	3.1	3.6	3.8
Producing	8.7	14.4	3.9	19.3	30.5	8.0	16.3	17.6	3.4	7.1	14.3	7.8	2.6	1.4	1.5	3.1	7.7	7.1	5.7
Nothing	11.2	4.8	0.8	4.6	3.2	--	1.0	1.2	4.5	2.3	2.6	1.3	3.9	1.4	1.5	3.1	--	3.6	5.7
Everything	5.6	6.8	3.1	2.7	--	5.7	1.0	3.5	3.4	3.5	1.3	5.2	9.1	13.0	3.1	3.1	6.1	3.6	9.4
Two or more elements	1.2	2.7	--	1.8	13.7	2.3	11.2	7.1	--	--	--	1.3	--	2.9	1.5	1.6	3.1	--	--
Meeting other Irish speakers	5.6	6.8	23.4	12.8	--	11.5	--	1.2	14.8	17.6	11.7	14.3	16.9	11.6	20.0	15.6	18.5	17.9	15.1
No response	32.3	31.5	25.8	22.0	26.3	33.3	32.6	36.5	32.9	28.2	36.4	24.7	39.0	40.6	35.4	37.5	41.5	33.9	28.3
Nos of participants	161	146	128	109	95	87	98	85	88	85	77	77	77	69	65	64	65	56	53

2.3 Individual learning targets that caused difficulties

Anois is Arís claimed to be a notional/functional course and to set its learning targets in terms of communicative functions. Accordingly it should have been possible to gain some sense of how learners thought they were progressing by asking them to assess their understanding/performance of the communicative functions which were listed as learning targets in the course book. However, as was explained in the Introduction (see above, 0.4.2), these learning targets were frequently judged to be inadequate in themselves and as a reflection of actual course content, so that in drafting the journal-questionnaires it was deemed necessary to elaborate them somewhat. The targets referred to in this section are those specified in the journal-questionnaires.

This section reports on those learning targets for which participants showed a greater than average tendency to give themselves a rating of "with difficulty" or "not at all".

Unit 1

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
vi	Get someone to give something to you or to someone else	14.0%	15.8%

In the course book this learning target is included under "How to make some requests", along with "Tar isteach" and "Fan nóiméad." However, in drawing up the journal-questionnaire for this unit we felt that, since this item received much fuller treatment than the other two, it needed to be specified more precisely. The treatment it receives in the course book is along structuralist rather than notional/functional lines, with different elements of the basic sentence being interchanged for other elements which have no semantic link with the original (e.g. "rothar" and "cupán tae"). Furthermore it is difficult to understand why this particular item should be picked out to receive special treatment in a unit whose main thematic emphasis was on greetings.

Unit 2

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
x	Ask and say if something is enough	13.4%	16.3%
xi	Ask and say what one has on	10.1%	18.1%
xii	Ask about and express feelings	16.5%	24.9%
xiii	Ask about and express pain	19.0%	29.4%

The four items listed in unit 2 as causing more than average difficulty were all dealt with fairly extensively in the television script which was available to the research team when the journal-questionnaires were being prepared. It was considered that they constituted learning targets for the unit as presented, though they were not listed in the course book as such.

The criteria for treating items xi, xii and xiii together in the television script seem to have been essentially grammatical. The basis for including them in the unit seems to have been that they shared certain syntactic features with the exponents of the function given in the course book, "How to say and ask what one has". The expression "Tá cóta agam" was contrasted with "Tá cóta orm", which in turn was contrasted on a different level with "Tá áthas orm" and "Tá tinneas cinn orm". The authors of the television script obviously failed to see the incongruity of treating these semantically divergent elements as if they expounded the same communicative function. It will be noted that in units 16 and 18 and to a lesser extent in unit 9 the authors of the course book are guilty of exactly the same kind of incongruity, interestingly enough with precisely the same functions.

Unit 4

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
iii	Distinguish between different things and people	9.8%	20.7%
iv	Ask who has something	13.3%	17.0%
vi	Contradict a person's answer ("Cinnte ...")	21.1%	25.9%
vii	Give emphasis to one's answer ("Cinnte ...")	20.0%	22.5%
xi	Give an opinion	11.5%	17.1%
xiv	Ask/give the price of something	15.1%	17.2%
xv	Distinguish "le chéile"/ "a chéile"	15.1%	17.2%

A fairly high percentage of participants reported difficulties with item iii, "Distinguishing between things and people". However, by unit 6, when this item was revised, only 5.7% still reported difficulty with it. The same thing happened with item iv, "Asking who has something"; in this case the percentage dropped to 7.9%.

Items vi and vii were not listed as learning targets in the course book, but both received so much treatment in the television script that they can be considered as such.

Item xi, "Giving an opinion", is an interesting case. For some reason between unit 4 and unit 6 (where it was revised) there is a rise in the percentage of participants who found the item difficult to understand and a drop in the percentage of those who found it difficult to produce. In terms of actual numbers the increase for understanding is from 14 to 16 participants and the drop for production from 19 to 13 participants. In the course book there is a marked discrepancy in treatment for this particular target in the two units. In unit 4 it is set as a target, but there is only one example of its use given, in the second conversation. In fact in this conversation the function of "Is dócha go bhfuil" is certainly not to express an opinion in the normal sense; it is used by a mother to shut up her over-curious son. The second exponent of

this function listed in the course book, "Shíl mé go raibh", receives no treatment in the lesson. By contrast, in unit six this target is not set in the course book, yet there are several examples of people expressing an opinion.

Unit 5

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
ii	Say what direction one took (past action)	18.8%	19.1%
iii	Ask for and give directions	15.4%	20.4%
iv	Ask about and give distance	22.1%	28.2%
v	Ask about and give relative position	14.9%	24.5%
vi	Say one is lost	12.8%	15.0%
viii	Say one can/may, or cannot/may not	14.8%	18.1%
x	Repeat what one told someone to do/not do	17.9%	18.3%

In this unit the major difficulty area was that of directions and distances. In the course book directions and distances receive sketchy treatment (only two pages), and the conversations used to exemplify the function of "asking for directions" contain language that is very complex on other levels. Perhaps the authors of the course book considered that learners would have achieved this particular learning target already; otherwise it would have required much fuller treatment than it receives here. It is worth noting that directions are scarcely mentioned in the teacher's handbook for this unit. In unit 6 directions and distances again created problems. Although unit 6 is meant as a revision of the first five units, this particular area was not revised.

Another source of reported difficulties in unit 5 was the function "Repeating what one told someone to do/not to do". In the course book this is expressed as "How to repeat what one has said", which clearly does not adequately describe the example given: "Dúirt mé leat gan casadh ar chlé." For those whose

knowledge of Irish was weak (or worse) such a deficient description of a function could only cause confusion. The same lack of precision in naming the function recurs in the teacher's manual for the course. Statements and commands/suggestions are both listed as exponents of the function "How to repeat what one has said". They are treated separately only because syntactically they are different.

Unit 6

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
xv	Express an opinion	18.8%	15.5%
xvi	Ask for and give directions	22.1%	31.8%
xvii	Ask/talk about past action (go/recognize)	19.1%	20.5%

Items xv and xvi have been dealt with in the comments on units 4 and 5 respectively. As for item xvii, it is not surprising that learners should have difficulty with the past tense. The functional orientation of the journal-questionnaire made it impossible to trace the difficulties that learners might have experienced in "talking about past action" (cf. above, 0.2).

Unit 7

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
iv	Express gratitude (new way)	12.6%	21.2%
vi	Show approval/encouragement of someone's actions	16.8%	17.7%
vii	Emphasize words	23.0%	27.6%

In this unit the main concentration was on talking about future and past action. The manner in which participants were asked to evaluate their ability to talk about the future or about the past was somewhat different from the usual questions in the journal-questionnaires and did not elicit enough responses from participants to enable us to draw any conclusions. The items listed as having caused difficulty in unit 7 were in fact minor ones. "Emphasizing words" was treated fairly extensively in the television programme but not specifically in the course book; the other two received less treatment. Accordingly no comments of any real validity can be made on this particular lesson.

Unit 8

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
iii	Talk about time - indefinite words, e.g. "later", "after a while"	13.3%	16.0%
iv	Express a condition under which something will happen	19.6%	27.1%
v	Give a warning	22.0%	31.7%
vi	Suggest a course of action	21.0%	25.7%

The major difficulty in this unit was with the understanding and production of sentences starting with "Má ...". The course book sets as the target "How to make suggestions" and gives as an example "Má thugann tú ..." In fact the unit contains two other distinct functions which are expressed by "Má ...". These are: (a) expressing a condition, e.g. "Má tá pian ort, caithfidh tú dul chuig an dochtúir" (p.65); (b) giving a warning, e.g. a mother warning her daughter about putting her hand in the fire (p.64). The actual suggestion that is made in the lesson is that the person offering you cake might remove the cream from it (p.64). A straightforward presentation of the target in grammatical terms would probably have been more honest and perhaps even more helpful than this lack of precision and clarity in functional definition. The same problem recurs in unit 12: a lack of precision and clarity in the presentation of the learning target and a relatively high percentage of participants reporting difficulty with it.

Unit 9

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
vi	Express certain feelings	10.5%	14.3%

The item which appears to have caused most difficulty in this unit was the function of "expressing certain feelings", which the authors of the course book took to include not only anger, joy and amazement but also hunger and thirst. This was an obvious case of items of language being combined under a functional title simply because of their syntactic similarity.

Unit 10

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
iii	Suggest doing something	12.0%	15.6%
v	Say something would be better for one	18.3%	24.6%
vi	Talk about the quality of things/people	27.6%	33.3%

Some of the difficulties reported in this unit were in areas which were not dealt with explicitly in the course book, for example, "Talking about the quality of things/people". In the television script available to us this was dealt with at the end of the programme in such detail that we felt justified in including it as a learning target in the journal-questionnaire for unit 10. "Saying that something would be better for one" is not set as a target in the course book, though on p.83 it is dealt with explicitly; and quite a lot of attention was given to it in the television script. As for "Suggesting doing something", in the course book this is included in "How to say what one would like or prefer", and yet the examples given on p.81 quite clearly involve making suggestions and offers.

Unit 12

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
ix	Express an obligation one had in the past	17.7%	22.7%
xi	Give a warning	18.5%	19.4%
xii	Suggest a course of action	20.8%	25.4%

We have already dealt with items xi and xii in our dircussion of unit 8, where these items first occur. It may be added that the examples given in unit 12 for the function "How to make suggestions" are even more obivcusly not suggestions than those in unit 8.

Item ix was a revision of an item in unit 7 which through an oversight was omitted from the journal-questionnaire for that week. It was dealt with in this unit, but not as thoroughly as in unit 7, and was obviously quite difficult for many participants.

Unit 13

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
iii	Ask/say if something is taking place	13.6%	15.8%
iv	Ask/express the quantity of people/things that is there	19.1%	18.7%
vi	Ask/say if something happens regularly	14.4%	14.7%
viii	Express speculation/ hearsay	17.6%	22.3%

Item viii, "Expressing speculation/hearsay", is another target that received quite full treatment in the television script, so that although it receives only incidental treatment in the course book, it seemed appropriate to list it as a learning target for unit 13.

In this unit lack of clarity and precision in defining communicative functions caused us to separate items that had been included under the learning target "How to ask and say if someone or something is there". Does this function really find expression in such exponents as "Inniu atá na lúthchleasa ann", and questions and statements about quantity or number like "Níl mórán móna ann"?

Unit 14

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
v	Politely suggest that someone do something	10.5%	18.4%
vi	Ask politely for permission to do something	16.9%	15.4%
vii	Offer assistance to someone	20.6%	24.3%

Once again we find that the course book subsumes in a single learning target, "How to ask does one mind", the three items with which difficulties were reported. A close examination of the examples and their contexts in the course book shows that there is very little functional connection between them. It would appear that in the minds of the authors of the course book the learning target was grammatical rather than functional since they simply give different uses for the expressions "an bhféadfainn ..." and "ar mhiste leat ...".

Unit 15

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
iv	Express a condition under which something will happen	19.0%	25.4%
v	Ask someone to leave one alone	19.6%	28.0%
vi	Ask/say if something matters or not	18.1%	24.2%

All the items listed as having caused difficulty come from the television script, where they received ample coverage.

Unit 16

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
vi	A who one does/did something for, with, to, etc.	10.0%	21.1%

For commentary see unit 18.

Unit 17

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
ii	Ask/say if one remembers something	17.7%	27.4%

Again this is a case of an item dealt with extensively in the television programme but not in the course book.

Unit 18

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
vi	Ask/say about the quantity of things/ people that is there	15.1%	18.9%
vii	Ask/say if something is taking place, is on	21.6%	23.5%
ix	Ask/say if one is a specific individual or not	16.4%	20.4%
x	Ask who one does/did something for, with, to, etc.	16.7%	24.1%
xi	Politely suggest that someone does something	12.8%	16.9%
xiii	Offer assistance	20.4%	26.9%
xviii	Report what someone said	7.4%	15.8%

Items xi and xiii, while not mentioned in the list of learning targets in the course book, were included in our list partly because this was a revision unit and partly because they were actually dealt with in the first two conversations (p.142).

As regards item x, "Asking who one does/did something for, with, to, etc.", the list of examples given for this very vague function includes the expression "Cé aige an bhfuil an peann?" But this is clearly a question relating to possession, something that was dealt with adequately in unit 4. Again this is a clear case of a target being set which is obviously grammatical or syntactical (in this case a question word followed by a prepositional phrase) and involves several functions which have very little if any relation to one another.

Unit 19

ITEM NO.	ITEM/LEARNING TARGET	% WHO FOUND THEY COULD UNDERSTAND OR SAY AN ITEM ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY OR NOT AT ALL	
		UNDERSTAND	SAY
v	Ask and tell price	11.5%	16.7%
vii	Give names/values of playing cards	45.0%	53.8%

Neither item listed as having caused difficulty was dealt with to any great extent in the course book or the television script. It is not surprising that playing cards should cause difficulty given the range of new vocabulary that had to be learned. The other item, "Asking and telling the price of something", is surprising since much lower percentages of difficulty ratings were registered for what seemed equally or more difficult items involving numbers.

2.4 Three subgroups of course participants: profile and progress

This section of the report focuses on three particular subgroups of course participants:

- those who completed and returned thirteen or more journal-questionnaires, including at least two in the last seven weeks of the course, and who thus gave evidence of following a substantial proportion of the course;
- those who returned not more than seven journal-questionnaires ;
- those who reported that before embarking on the course they had absolutely no knowledge of Irish.

2.4.1 Subgroup of course participants who returned thirteen or more journal-questionnaires, including at least two in the last seven weeks of the course (65: 38.9% of all respondents)

The age range of this subgroup (Table 98) was as extensive as that of the 171 original volunteers, and as in the case of the latter the majority of the subgroup were aged between twenty-five and forty-five. One notes that of the five original volunteers who were over sixty-five years of age, three fall into this

TABLE 98 Age range of subgroup who returned 13 or more journal-questionnaires compared with that of the original group of volunteers

	Subgroup (65)	Original volunteers (171)
Under 25 years	7.7%	12.3%
25-45 years	61.5%	63.2%
46-65 years	26.2%	19.3%
Over 65 years	4.6%	2.9%
No response	---	2.3%

subgroup, whereas of the twenty-five original volunteers who were under twenty-five years of age only five fall into this subgroup.

The preponderance of females in this subgroup is higher than in the group of original volunteers (Table 99). In other words, a higher proportion of the original female volunteers than of the original male volunteers appear to have stayed with the course.

TABLE 99	Sex distribution in subgroup of those who filled in and returned at least 13 journal-questionnaires compared with that of original group of volunteers	
	Subgroup (65)	Original volunteers (171)
Female	78.5%	73.1%
Male	18.5%	25.1%
No response	3.1%	1.8%

More than two fifths of course participants in this subgroup (43.1% as compared with 35.1% of the original group of volunteers) were housewives/homemakers/mothers. 13.8% were teachers, either practising, unemployed or retired (as against 11.2% of the original group of volunteers), but interestingly only one student/pupil is found in this subgroup out of the six who originally volunteered to take part in the project. The remaining 41.5% of the subgroup were scattered over a wide range of professions and occupations.

The proportions of course participants in this subgroup who had received different levels of education were broadly similar to those recorded for the original group of volunteers (see above, 1.1.7, Table 11).

Only two of the course participants in this subgroup did not have English as their first language, and these two gave Irish as their first language.

Proportions of course participants in this subgroup who had and had not known Irish before embarking on the course were almost identical to the proportions of these two categories of learner in the original group of volunteers (Table 100). This suggests that a complete beginner was as likely to continue participating in the course as a person who already knew some Irish.

TABLE 100	Percentages who had and had not previously learned Irish in subgroup of those who returned at least 13 journal-questionnaires compared with proportions who had and had not learned Irish in the original group of volunteers	
	Subgroup (65)	Original volunteers (171)
Had previously learned Irish	90.8%	88.3%
Had not previously learned Irish	9.2%	10.5%
No response	---	1.2%

On the other hand, whereas more than two fifths of those in the original group of volunteers who had previously learned Irish had reported in the pre-course questionnaire that their knowledge of Irish was "weak", only a third of course participants in this subgroup fell into the same category (Table 101). Proportions of course participants in this subgroup who had used other categories when assessing their Irish in the pre-course questionnaire were closer to the proportions of those in the

TABLE 101	How members of this subgroup (at least 13 journal-questionnaires) who had previously learned Irish rated their knowledge of the language compared with members of the original volunteer group who had previously learned Irish	
	Subgroup (59)	Original volunteers (151)
"very good"	5.1%	6.6%
"good"	30.5%	23.8%
"quite good"	30.5%	23.8%
"weak"	33.9%	45.7%

original group of volunteers who had previously learned Irish who used these same categories, being very slightly lower in the case of "very good" and rather higher in the case of "good" and "quite good".

If one calculates the average rating on a ten-point scale that members of this subgroup gave to the course book, the television programme and the radio programme for each unit of the

TABLE 102 Percentages of members of subgroup (at least 13 journal-questionnaires) giving different average ratings to their ability to perform the learning targets set for/derived from each unit (in relation to total numbers of subgroup members who gave information under this head)

Rating \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1 ("not at all")	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.7	--	--	1.7	--	--	1.6	--	--	1.7	1.8	1.9
2 ("with difficulty")	--	--	--	4.9	5.1	1.8	8.5	5.0	5.1	8.6	5.0	8.6	10.3	4.9	3.3	1.6	3.4	7.3	5.8
3 ("fairly easily")	6.3	15.9	23.0	11.5	25.4	14.3	18.6	26.7	22.0	27.6	21.7	22.4	20.7	26.2	29.5	19.7	24.1	20.0	21.2
4 ("easily")	32.8	30.2	34.4	47.5	37.3	46.4	35.6	41.7	37.3	37.9	45.0	39.7	32.8	41.0	36.1	32.8	31.0	32.7	38.5
5 ("very easily and fluently")	60.9	54.0	42 6	36.1	32.2	37.5	37.3	25.0	35.6	25.9	26.7	29.3	36.2	26.2	31.1	45.9	39.7	38.2	32.7
Nos of subgroup members giving rating	64	63	61	61	59	56	59	60	59	58	60	58	58	61	61	61	58	55	52

course, one finds that a majority of these ratings in any week are located on the upper half of the scale (i.e. between 6 and 10). For most units 45-50% of members of this subgroup gave an average rating of between 8 and 10. This percentage dropped to 41.5% for unit 6 and to 40.0% for units 9 and 19, and rose to 60.0% for unit 2 and 57.0% for unit 12.

The journal-questionnaires asked participants to use a five-point scale to rate their ability to perform the learning targets. The average weekly rating for a majority of those members of the subgroup who gave information under this head is consistently between 4 and 5; that is to say, every week most members of the subgroup who rated their ability to perform the learning targets claimed on average to be able to perform them "easily" or "very easily" (Table 102).

2.4.2 Subgroup of those who filled in not more than seven journal-questionnaires (68: 40.7% of all respondents)

The age range of this subgroup matches closely that of the original group of volunteers. However, of the twenty people aged under twenty-five in the original volunteer group over half were in this subgroup, as were four of the six students who started the course. Otherwise the spread of occupations approximately matched that of the original volunteer group. A higher proportion of men than of women participating in the project filled in not more than seven journal-questionnaires: 48.8% compared with 37.6%.

The proportions of course participants in this subgroup who had received different levels of education approximated to those recorded for the original group of volunteers (see above, 1.1.7, Table 11).

One of the three people in the original volunteer group who had Irish as their first or home language dropped out early, as did one of the two who had Dutch and the lone native speaker of Norwegian.

Nine of the eighteen people who had reported in the pre-course questionnaire that they had not previously learned Irish belonged to this subgroup. Table 103 shows how the remaining 59 members of the subgroup assessed their knowledge of Irish in the pre-course questionnaire.

TABLE 103	How members of this subgroup (7 journal-questionnaires or less) who had previously learned Irish rated their knowledge of the language compared with members of the original volunteer group who had previously learned Irish	
	Subgroup (59)	Original volunteers (151)
"very good"	5.1%	6.6%
"good"	22.0%	23.8%
"quite good"	13.6%	23.8%
"weak"	59.3%	45.7%

Table 104 shows how different percentages of subgroup members who gave information under this head assessed their ability to perform the learning targets set for/derived from each unit.

TABLE 104 Percentages of members of subgroup (7 journal-questionnaires or less) giving different average ratings to their ability to perform the learning targets set for/derived from each unit (in relation to total numbers of subgroup members who gave information under this head)

Rating \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1 ("not at all")	1.7	4.0	--	3.9	--	--	18.2	16.7	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2 ("with difficulty")	3.3	4.0	5.9	11.5	26.7	7.7	--	--	--	50.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
3 ("fairly easily")	15.0	26.0	41.2	23.1	13.3	30.8	36.4	--	20.0	50.0	50.0	33.3	33.3	--	--	--	--	--	--
4 ("with difficulty")	28.3	34.0	35.3	46.2	20.0	23.1	27.3	83.3	60.0	--	50.0	--	33.3	100.0	100.0	--	--	--	--
5 ("very easily and fluently")	51.7	32.0	17.6	15.4	40.0	38.5	18.2	--	20.0	--	--	66.7	33.3	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nos of subgroup members giving rating	60	50	34	26	15	13	11	6	5	2	2	3	3	1	1	--	--	--	--

2.4.3 Subgroup of absolute beginners (15: 9.0% of all respondents)

Of the 18 original volunteers who reported that they were absolute beginners, 15 filled in journal-questionnaires. Most of these held a nationality other than Irish. However, three reported that they had been born in the Republic of Ireland and three others gave their nationality as Irish, Irish/British and Irish/American respectively. Another member of the subgroup was from Northern Ireland.

Three of the 15 respondents who were absolute beginners were male. Of these, one was Irish, one was British/Irish, and one was Dutch. None of the three was married. One gave his occupation as "insurance", another described himself as "retired", and the third gave no details about himself. One gave as his reason for wanting to learn Irish the intellectual challenge (he reported that he had a knowledge of French, German, Arabic and Turkish); another gave as his reason a desire to understand the Irish that he saw and heard around him (he reported that he knew French, Spanish and Latin); and one gave as his reason "to see how it would go with the people" (he reported no knowledge of other languages).

Of the three male absolute beginners one returned only one journal-questionnaire but said he had liked the television programme and the lesson in the course book and found them helpful. This volunteer did not return a questionnaire to say why he had dropped out of the project (see 2.5 below). Another followed the course for three weeks using only the radio and the course book. He found the course very disappointing and not at all suited to a beginner; he criticized chiefly the lack of co-ordination between the radio programmes and the course book, claiming that not even a third of the words in the latter were treated in the former. He compared Anois is Arís very unfavourably with a radio course in French that was being broadcast at the same time. A third male absolute beginner took part in the project for all of the twenty weeks but apart from two weeks used only the course book and made very little comment, either favourable or unfavourable.

Twelve of the fifteen respondents who were absolute beginners were female. All of the twelve were married and aged between 25 and 50. Four were teachers, two of them not practising, and one was a social worker. The others categorized themselves as housewives. Eight had received some third-level education. All but one had learned some other modern language; most had learned two; nearly all of them had learned French. The reasons they gave for deciding to learn Irish were:

- to help their children (present or future) with their Irish homework (7);
- to understand Irish as it is spoken or written around them (6);

- to obtain a qualification to enable them to teach in Ireland (2);

- to enable them to communicate with people in the Gaeltacht (3);

- to learn about her adoptive country (1);

- for the sake of the intellectual challenge (2).

Only seven beginners participated in the project for more than 7 units. Of these, five (all female) reported regular private study, three of them about one hour per week, the other two 2-3 hours per week. Table 105 shows the distribution of average self-ratings of those absolute beginners who gave such information in respect of the learning targets set for/derived from each unit.

Most of the beginners who participated in the project for not more than seven units reported that they found the course too difficult - "not at all suited to beginners", as one of them put it. Another member of the subgroup made the following comment:

> "Overall the radio is the most useful part of the course but the programmes are at very bad times. The whole family feels the TV is very bad; the jokes are laboured and the teaching is not direct enough."

A further member of the subgroup commented that she could not respond to the "audio-visual method of teaching" and needed more of the written word.

Four of the six beginners who also belonged to the subgroup who filled in at least thirteen journal-questionnaires were severely critical of the television programmes, whereas they found the radio programmes more helpful - "valuable, logical and organized", as one of them wrote. One beginner who had been particularly thorough in her filling out of the journal-questionnaires described her overall reactions at the end of the course as those of "an English person who had no contact with Irish whatsoever prior to following the course". She felt that the course covered too much too quickly and that the materials contained in the first twenty lessons would make a two-year course for a beginner. She made a suggestion that was echoed frequently in other subjects' journal-questionnaires, that the television programmes should have followed the course book more closely and should have mentioned the pages in the book that were relevant to the matter in hand. Her criticism of the television component was similar to that of the other beginners and also of quite a few other participants. For this reason it is worth quoting in full:

TABLE 105 Percentages of members of subgroup (absolute beginners) giving different average ratings to their ability to perform the learning targets set for/derived from each unit (in relation to total numbers of subgroup members who gave information under this head)

Rating \ Week no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1 ("not at all")	5.9	7.1	--	9.1	--	--	11.1	11.1	--	--	14.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2 ("with difficulty")	5.9	7.1	21.4	45.5	28.6	33.3	33.3	44.4	66.7	80.0	42.9	57.1	71.4	42.9	20.0	16.7	--	20.0	20.0
3 ("fairly easily")	29.4	57.1	57.1	18.2	57.1	33.3	44.4	33.3	33.3	20.0	42.9	14.3	14.3	28.6	80.0	66.7	80.0	80.0	60.0
4 ("easily")	52.9	28.6	21.4	27.3	14.3	33.3	11.1	11.1	--	--	--	14.3	14.3	28.6	--	16.7	20.0	--	20.0
5 ("very easily and fluently")	5.9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	14.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Numbers of subgroup members giving rating	17	14	14	11	7	6	9	9	6	5	7	7	7	7	5	6	5	5	5

"The worst thing about the TV series is that it is so puerile. A lot of valid, interesting and informative material is smothered by some of those ridiculous sketches. I realize that they are intended to bring humour to the lesson and also to give variety to the presentation (a sound idea in itself) but the net effect is embarrassing and patronising."

Another beginner, this time an American, argued in her report on unit 5 that the television would be much better if the "codology was cut out and they got on with the teaching". In her report on unit 14 she commented: "The television stinks. ... Irish can be learned through tapes and radio more successfully than being teased on television."

Most beginners said that they would have liked the course book to contain a vocabulary, preferably with a pronunciation guide.

2.5 Information elicited from some volunteers who dropped out of the project

In order to form an impression of why volunteers dropped out of the project a questionnaire (see Appendix C) was sent out in late September 1932 to those who had returned no journal-questionnaires after week 13. Of 85 questionnaires sent out, 49 were returned. Of these 49 respondents, 21 said they had stopped taking part in Anois is Arís when they had stopped sending back journal-questionnaires, and 28 said they had continued with the course. Table 106 shows the numbers reporting that they had used different components of Anois is Arís regularly and occasionally.

TABLE 106 Numbers of participants who dropped out of the project but who reported that they had continued to use components of Anois is Arís regularly or occasionally

	Regularly	Occasionally
Viewed TV programmes	11	14
Studied course book	6	19
Listened to radio programmes	9	8

The distribution of reasons for not continuing to return journal-questionnaires given by those who reported that they had continued with the course is set out in Table 107.

TABLE 107 Reasons given by those who reported that they had continued with Anois is Arís for not continuing to return journal-questionnaires

Family commitments	5
Work commitments	10
Found the journal-questionnaire boring, or it took too much time to fill in	8
Lost interest in the research project	6

The distribution of reasons for not continuing given by those who reported that they had not continued with the course is set out in Table 108.

TABLE 108	Reasons given by those who reported that they had not continued with Anois is Arís for not continuing
Family commitments	5
Work commitments	5
The course itself	12

Although only 1½ respondents said their reasons for not continuing with the course were associated with the course itself, 26 felt they needed to comment on the course by replying to question 4. Sixteen respondents criticized the television presentation, while two praised it. One specifically praised the radio presentation, while one praised and another criticized the presentation of the course book. Five respondents found the television and radio programmes too difficult, and three found the radio programmes too fast.

It would appear therefore that the reasons people discontinued with the course and/or with the research project were connected in roughly equal proportion with personal commitments, loss of interest in the research project, and loss of interest in the course.

Reference

Rybak, Stephanie, 1980: Learning Languages from the BBC. Research into courses for adults. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.

Conclusions

On the first page of the course book Anois is Arís is described as being aimed at "those who have never been able to speak Irish and who have had little or no contact with it since leaving school". This implies that the years spent learning Irish at school have failed to equip many members of the adult population with the confidence and ability to use the language for purposes of everydav communication. The evidence concerning our volunteers' experience of learning Irish at school would seem to support such a view, pointing as it does to a predominance of learning materials and pedagogical approaches unlikely to promote the competence or confidence required for genuinely communicative use of the spoken language.

At least as far as our volunteer group is concerned, RTÉ seems to have judged the target audience for Anois is Arís correctly as regards dominant age range (25-45 years) and an interest in learning to communicate through Irish in everyday situations. Easily the most frequently mentioned of the reasons our volunteers gave for deciding to follow Anois is Arís was the convenience of a self-instructional course that could be taken at home, which may indicate the existence of a substantial market for educational broadcasting in general. Some volunteers gave as a reason for following the course the opportunity it provided for members of a family to learn together. This may be an advantage of educational television generally; in the case of Anois is Arís it has additional significance in that the most frequently mentioned of the circumstances in which our volunteers envisaged communicating through Irish was at home.

The rates at which our volunteers participated in Anois is Arís are broadly comparable with participation rates recorded for BBC multi-media language courses among volunteer groups. If, as seems probable, our volunteers participated at a substantially higher rate than the public at large, this would presumably have been due to their greater interest, motivation, and clarity as regards learning-goals.

In view of the continuing decline of the Irish language, courses like Anois is Arís can be judged successful only to the extent that they cause people to modify their behaviour patterns by starting to use Irish regularly in their daily lives. This modification is unlikely to be sustained without external support of a more thoroughgoing kind than appears to have been provided by the evening classes and support groups associated with the course. The advertising which preceded the course seems to have been only partially successful in its attempt to persuade intending learners to join evening classes and/or support groups. Only about half our volunteers did so, and evening classes and support groups showed a far sharper decline in participation than any other component of the Anois is Arís package.

In general our volunteer participants reacted favourably to the course, especially its lay-out and presentation. However, in the responses to the pre-course questionnaire, the cultural/patriotic dimension was frequently mentioned as a factor in previous enjoyment of learning Irish and as a motive for taking the course, and the course's lack of cultural content elicited negative reactions from previous learners of Irish and absolute beginners alike. Also, contrary to the generally favourable response, many of the more specific and reflective comments contained in the journal-questionnaires were sharply critical.

In the introduction to this report we were critical of the course book for its often imprecise and inaccurate specification of learning targets. This deficiency caused problems in the drawing up of the journal-questionnaires. More seriously, the difficulties that volunteers reported in their journal-questionnaires tended to coincide with unclear and imprecise learning targets as well as with areas that received substantial coverage in the course without even being mentioned among the stated learning targets. This is one of several respects in which the course falls short of fulfilling the notional/functional principles on which its authors claim to have based it.

In sum, our research suggests that RTÉ's view of its target audience and their needs and interests was broadly correct; that more attention needs to be given to the provision of back-up activities in relation to any future course of this kind; and that the planning of the course would have benefited from more care, more research, and above all a greater understanding of notional/functional principles.

APPENDIX A

Pre-course questionnaire

One aspect of language production was accidentally omitted from Question 8 of the pre-course questionnaire: pronunciation. As a result the data elicited by this question was incomplete and so was not included in the report.

ANOIS IS ARIS

Pre-course questionnaire

A. The first part of this questionnaire is designed to give us an insight into your experience of language(s) to date

1. What language did you first speak as a child?

2. Have you ever learnt Irish? YES/NO*

   If NO, please proceed to Question 15

3. At what age did you begin to learn Irish?

4. Did you take Irish at primary school? YES/NO*

   If YES, please tick those of the activities listed below that you had to perform in Irish:

   - repeating individual sounds
   - repeating whole phrases or sentences
   - oral grammar exercises
   - written grammar exercises
   - essays
   - translations
   - summaries
   - project work
   - free conversation
   - debates
   - reading passages from textbooks
   - reading extracts from newspapers, magazines etc.
   - reading poems, short stories etc.
   - listening to tapes/records of speech
   - listening to tapes/records of songs
   - watching films/television/videotapes

*Please delete as appropriate

5. Did you take Irish at post-primary school? YES/NO*

If YES, please tick those of the activities listed below that you had to perform in Irish:

- repeating individual sounds
- repeating whole phrases or sentences
- oral grammar exercises
- written grammar exercises
- essays
- translations
- summaries
- project work
- free conversation
- debates
- reading passages from textbooks
- reading extracts from newspapers, magazines etc.
- reading poems, short stories, etc.
- listening to tapes/records of speech
- listening to tapes/records of songs
- watching films/television/video tapes

6. Have you ever followed a course in Irish other than at school? YES/NO*

If YES, please describe briefly:

and tick those of the activities listed below that you had to perform in Irish:

- repeating individual sounds
- repeating whole phrases or sentences
- oral grammar exercises
- written grammar exercises
- essays
- translations
- summaries
- project work

*Please delete as appropriate

free conversation

debates

reading passages from textbooks

reading extracts from newspapers, magazines etc.

reading poems, short stories etc.

listening to tapes/records of speech

listening to tapes/records of songs

watching films/television/videotapes

7. Have you ever been taught other subjects through the medium of Irish -

(i) at primary school? YES/NO*

If YES, please give details:

(ii) at post-primary school? YES/NO*

If YES, please give details:

8. How difficult have you found the different aspects of Irish? Please tick the boxes below as appropriate:

	very hard	hard	normal	easy	very easy
getting the exact form right (word endings etc.)					
finding the right word for a particular thing, idea etc.					
getting the word order right					
finding the right turn of phrase for exactly what you want to say in a particular situation					
getting the right intonation					

*Please delete as appropriate

9. How do you rate your knowledge of Irish - very good, good, quite good, weak?

10. What do you think you do best in Irish - read, understand speech, speak, write?

11. What do you think you do least well in Irish - read, understand speech, speak, write?

12. Apart from Irish classes, have you ever spoken Irish with -

(i) a native speaker of the language? YES/NO*

If YES, please stat how often and under what circumstances:

(ii) other speakers of the language? YES/NO*

If YES, please state how often and under what circumstances:

13. What did you enjoy most about learning Irish?

14. What did you enjoy least about learning Irish?

*Please delete as appropriate

15. Have you ever learnt any other language? YES/NO*

If YES, please fill in the boxes below:

LANGUAGE	Age at which learning began?	Taken at primary school?	Taken at post-primary school?	Learnt elsewhere? (Please give details of institutions, course etc.)	How do you rate your knowledge of the language?**

*Please delete as appropriate

**Please use one of the following: very good, good, quite good, weak

16. What did you enjoy most about learning this language/these languages?

17. What did you enjoy least about learning this language/these languages?

B. <u>This part of the questionnaire is concerned with your decision to follow the RTE Irish course</u>

18. Why did you decide to learn Irish/improve your Irish?

19. Why did you decide specifically to follow the RTE course?

20. Will you

- follow the TV course? YES/NO*
- use the course book? YES/NO*
- follow the associated radio programme? YES/NO*
- join a support group? YES/NO*
- attend evening classes related to the course? YES/NO*
- find someone to practise speaking Irish with? YES/NO*

21. Do you want eventually to be able to use Irish as a means of communication? YES/NO*

If YES, with whom and under what circumstances?

22. Do you expect Irish to be of any practical benefit in your daily life and/or work? YES/NO*

If YES, please give details:

*Please delete as appropriate

C. The following questions ask for information about yourself

23. Please give your

date of birth:
place of birth:
nationality:
sex:
occupation:

24. Do you live alone or in a household?
If in a household, what is the language in general use?

25. Are you married? YES/NO*
If YES, what language did your husband/wife first speak as a child?

26. Have you any children? YES/NO*
If YES, what language did they speak first?

27. What language did your mother first speak as a child?

28. What language did your father first speak as a child?

*Please delete as appropriate

29. Please state the number of years you spent in full-time education:

Primary school	_____	years
Post-primary school	_____	years
College/University	_____	years

30. Have you followed part-time courses in any subject since completing your full-time education? YES/NO*

If YES, please give details

31. What are your leisure-time pursuits?

*Please delete as appropriate

APPENDIX B

Sample journal-questionnaire

(Unit 5)

131

AMOIS IS ARIS JOURNAL

WEEK No 5 PROGRAMME TITLE: *Cá bhfuil an leithreas ?* CODE No

Please return completed JOURNAL by: Saturday *19th December 1981*
(10 days after the first showing of this programme on TV)

---

1. This week, were you able to

   (a) Watch the TV programme? YES/NO

   (b) Study the course book? YES/NO

   (c) Listen to the radio programme? YES/NO

   (d) Take part in other activities connected with the course (e.g., classes, support groups, meeting someone to practice speaking Irish with)? Please specify _____

1a. If you were able to do more than one of the above, in what order did you do them this week?

   (i) _____ (ii) _____ (iii) _____ (iv) _____

2. How much private study (preparation, revision etc.) did you do? _____

3. If you did some private study, what did it consist of?

   _____

   _____

4. During this week, did you hear/read any Irish (apart from on the course)? YES/NO
   If so, what did it consist of?

   HEAR _____

   READ _____

5. During this week, did you get a chance to use Irish to anyone or in any way (apart from activities connected with the course)? YES/NO
   If so, please give details

   _____

6. How would you rate your enthusiasm for learning Irish this week?
   Put a ✓ in the appropriate box.

   Very high ☐ High ☐ Average ☐ Low ☐ Very low ☐

7. Was there any factor (outside of the course) which may have affected your work or enthusiasm

   FAVOURABLY? YES/NO UNFAVOURABLY? YES/NO

WEEK N° 5 PROGRAMME TITLE: *Cá bhfuil an leithreas ?*

8. Below is a list of things you were supposed to be able to understand and say in Irish at the end of this week's lesson, - *understand* someone else saying them and *say* them yourself. For each item, put a U in the box that best corresponds to how you can *understand* it in (spoken) Irish and an S in the box that best corresponds to how you can say it in Irish. If both the U and the S are to go into the same box write U/S. At the bottom of our list space is left for you to add in anything else you feel you have learned to understand or say but which we have not listed.

		very easily (and fluently)	easily	fairly easily	with difficulty	not at all
(i)	ask and say where one went (past action)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(ii)	say what direction one took (past action)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(iii)	ask for and give directions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(iv)	ask about and give distance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(v)	ask about and give relative position (up there, down there etc)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(vi)	say one is lost	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(vii)	say one must	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(viii)	say one can/may, or cannot/may not	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(ix)	ask and say if one knows something	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(x)	repeat what one told someone to do/not do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(xi)		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(xii)		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. What did you enjoy most about this lesson?

10. What did you find you learned well? Can you say why you think you learned it?

11. What did you find most difficult in this lesson? Why?

12. What would you feel you need more help with or more practice on?

13. For EACH element in the course (TV, course book, radio, other activities*) give a grade of from 1 to 10 (where 10 is the best, and 1 the worst) on each of the following aspects *for this week*.

	TV	TEXTBOOK	RADIO	OTHER ACTIVITIES*
Helping you to understand	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interest	☐	☐	☐	☐
Usefulness for speaking Irish	☐	☐	☐	☐
Enjoyment	☐	☐	☐	☐
Increasing your enthusiasm for learning Irish	☐	☐	☐	☐
Increasing your interest in Irish culture/ traditions etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. What did you find most helpful this week in each of the following:

TV _____

COURSE BOOK _____

RADIO _____

OTHER ACTIVITIES* _____

15. Any other comments:

*classes, support groups, meeting someone to practise speaking Irish with.

APPENDIX C

The following questionnaire was sent to those volunteers who returned no journal-questionnaires after week 13.

ANOIS IS AMÁRACH

(Please tick)

1. When you stopped sending back the journals did you also stop taking part in "Anois is Arís"?

   Yes ___ No ___

   If "No" did you continue to:

	Regularly	Occasionally
view T.V. programmes	___	___
listen to Radio programmes	___	___
study course book	___	___

2. If you continued with the course did you stop sending back the journals for any of the following reasons?

   family commitments ___
   work commitments ___
   the journal was boring and repetitive ___
   lost interest in the research project ___
   the journal took too much time to fill ___

   Other reasons: _____

3. If you did not continue with the course was this because of:

   family commitments? ___
   work commitments? ___
   the course itself? ___

   Other reasons: _____

4. If your reason for not continuing was related to the course itself was it because:

	T.V.	Radio	Book
it was too difficult	___	___	___
it went too fast	___	___	___
it went too slow	___	___	___
did not like the way it was presented	___	___	___

   Other reasons: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

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